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WHEN THINGS WERE DOING

By

C. A. STEERE

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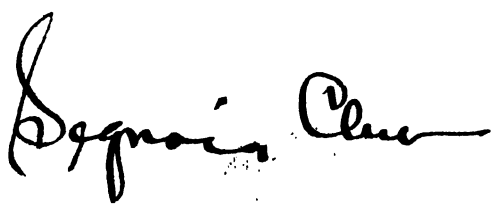

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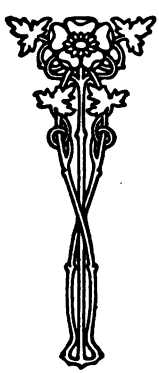

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1908

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When Things Were Doing

CHAPTER I.

The Honorable Bill Tempest solemnly lifted the glass of what, after due assiduity and extreme pains in compounding, he was pleased to call Roman punch. The sun was dropping swiftly down toward the Palisades of the Hudson and his approaching exit from a wintry world of frozen fields and bare branches was attended by a gorgeousness as unusual for the season as it was spectacular. In a veritable blaze of glory his blood-red disc, framed in a sea of crimson satellites, bathed with an unearthly radiance the still snow-covered landscape of the Bronx, the crisp shining stretches of road where an occasional chime of sleigh bells lingered in the frosty air, the picturesque cottages of the well-to-do, the deserted parks, the skating ponds where bands of shouting youngsters scudded and circled with their hockey sticks, the many towers and spires that looked enchanted in the soft red winter haze.

Very critically, like the connoisseur he was, the honorable Bill poised his glass in the mellow glow that radiated from the west and gazed at the amber liquid.

"Madame," he said at last, "since you decline to join me on this festive occasion, which comes but once a year, permit me to drink to your continued health and happiness;" and he tossed off the contents of his glass at a gulp, smacking his lips approvingly. He reached for the decanter to repeat the process, but madame was contrary minded and snatched the prize out of his reach, depositing it upon the sideboard.

"Don't be such a glutton, Bill," she protested, her red lips pouting saucily, her dark eyes glinting mischief. "I actually believe you'd swallow that horrid stuff to the last drop right before my face and eyes, if I'd let you—but I won't let you."

"No," argued her husband, selecting a fat Havana from his pocket case, "that's where you're wrong; I wouldn't—not if you turn your face and eyes the other way."

With a sudden rush a low lying bank of clouds, just thrusting its somber bulk over the horizon, swallowed the glory of the sunset and brought twilight to the cozy and daintily-appointed dining room and its occupants. Mad-

ame, switched on the electric lights, drew the curtains and, donning a voluminous apron, proceeded to clear the table aided and abetted by Liza, temporarily their only domestic help, the other servants having been given their liberty for the day.

The head of the family meanwhile, with sundry grunts of what he thought was satisfaction, but which were more than likely due to a distended stomach, lolled in a capacious leather-upholstered Morris chair, elevated his slippered feet, puffed his irreproachable Havana, and watched with mingled admiration and envy the energetic movements of his wife; for it was Christmas and the elaborate dinner, prepared by madame's own dainty hands, had been a revelation to her lord and master accustomed though he was to her exquisite menus. In an incredibly short time the debris of the feast had been removed to the kitchen, the dining room put in order by the fair young chatelaine and nothing remained of Christmas dinner but the memory—a mighty pleasant one, by the way, to judge by the beatific expression of the honorable Bill.

"Josephine," coaxed that worthy; ingratiatingly, "you might—er—if you would be so kind——"

"Oh—you want that punch?" queried madame. "Well, it would be a burning shame if you had to leave your chair and get it. All right; don't move for the world," and placing the desired nectar on a tray, together with some glasses and a box of cigars, she set the tray upon a little inlaid table and wheeled the outfit across the room to his elbow.

"Seems to me," she remarked, with mock severity not unmixed with mild wonder at her lord's undeniable storage capacity, "that you have about contributed your share for one day toward your Uncle Sam's internal revenue tax. It was sundry cocktails before breakfast; then it was highballs, gin rickeys, milk punches and the Lord knows what else, until luncheon time; your luncheon, out of deference to the fact that you were to have an early Christmas dinner, consisted of a whole pumpkin pie, washed down with a half gallon—I should say—of russet cider; at dinner it was oyster cocktails to start off with, a bottle of Madeira with the soup, a bottle of Rhine wine with the fish, a botle of Chianti with the sweetbreads, followed by a half pint of claret, burgundy, sherry, port, sauterne or hock with every other course—except that you drowned the turkey with two pints of champagne, had burnt brandy with

your coffee and now, although it is only 4:45 and dinner is scarcely off the table, you are wrestling with a quart of Roman punch. It is a long time to midnight, and what other feats of bibulosity you are destined to accomplish goodness only knows. Judging, however, from—"

"By George!" interrupted the unabashed spouse, anxiously, "did you save a half pint of that Jersey cream—and some eggs?—I've got to mix an egg-nogg for a nightcap, made with some of that 1847 Jamaica rum. Nothing like it to make a fellow sleep, don't you know."

"Well, did anybody ever!" expostulated madame, incredulously. "Oh, goodness, yes; I imagine you will find some cream and eggs in the pantry—that is," she added, sarcastically, "if you think you can stop drinking long enough to require a nightcap."

"That's the stuff!" he commented, greatly relieved, and totally ignoring the sarcasm. "Say, Josie, you're a peach—a positive treasure—don't know what the dickens I'd do without you. Now get your violin, that's a good girl, and we'll have some Schopenhaur—heavens! no, I mean Schubert, Tschaikowski, Adamowski, or some other Owski—gad! you've got 'em all faded to a finish, whether it's music, menus or

WHEN THINGS WERE DOING

say? Fact is, folks, I'd forgotten all about it until she reminded me of it a few minutes ago. It's early yet, though. But wait—come to think of it I can't go—Josie you run and get ready, but it's all off with me. I've got those infernal proofsheets to correct. Beastly bother, but the publishers have to have them in the morning. It's a good four or five hours' job, too, and I'd rather be hanged than fuss with them tonight."

"If you can't go, I'll stay and keep you company," declared Mrs. Tempest.

"Nonsense!" he cried, "you'd have the time of your life moping around the house all alone Christmas night, for I shouldn't let you so much as poke your nose into the den. So you see this chance is a godsend for you. Go and dress, now, like a good girl."

"Come on!" chorused the others, "he doesn't want you and we do."

Thus adjured, madame yielded and went upstairs to get ready. Of course there had to be mixed another bowl of punch, for the ex-assemblyman was the quintessence of hospitality, and by the time Mrs. Tempest came down looking like a prize winner, as one of the young men had the temerity to hazard as his opinion, the whole company was in an exalted frame of mind and her husband, having recovered his

second wind, was in the midst of a most eloquent and learned disquisition upon the points of resemblance between a certain baffled governor and Diogenes. So sympathetic was the audience that it was on the point of starting a subscription to buy a lantern for the unhappy chief executive.

"Well, girls, get into your coon-skins," said Blake, "we've got to be scorching down town; but for my part I call it pretty hard lines to have to ride several miles on a cold night to see a counterfeit presentment when we've got the real thing right here."

"Oh, he's a wonder," remarked Mrs. Bill, in a sotto voce cadence, and having in mind his recuperative, rather than his histrionic powers.

Then the crowd said good night and left the honorable Bill to his own devices; and while he is skirmishing around in the pantry assembling the component parts of his egg-nog, a short sketch of his previous condition of servitude may the better prepare the reader for what is to follow.

* * * * *

Born and reared on a New Hampshire farm where the Saco threads its way to the sea through giant mountains, William Tempest's boyhood was much the same as that of thousands of

country youths. He attended the district schools, hunted, trapped and cast his flies in whirling trout pools, often helping out at farm work in summer, often guiding tourist parties through the Presidential range. His father, being comfortably well-to-do, allowed the lad for the most part to follow his own bent. If there was any one thing at which the young man particularly excelled it was probably his ability to take a yardful of school boys, younger or older than himself—it didn't seem to matter much—and pile them in a heap at his feet, holding them there at his sweet will while he stuffed their neckbands full of snow. This was his long suit, and it not only conduced to give him a certain eclat and standing among the husky young mountaineers of his bailiwick, but it also not inconceivably operated as a stretcher for his hat-band.

When he was sixteen Bill thought he had absorbed about all the culture in the line of book learning that the home schools had on tap, and decided to tackle a "prep" institution in a neighboring state; but a dude schoolmaster from Boston, coming to board at the farm, put it up to Old Man Tempest that he could divide some of his all-embracing knowledge and still retain enough to do him. Bill, being open to conviction, a bargain was struck and the young man had a tutor to tute.

As long as daylight lasted a yoke of oxen couldn't have dragged Bill up to a tangled and perfidious snarl of Greek and Latin roots. He vastly preferred to strap on his snow-shoes, call the dogs and, gun on his shoulder, disappear in the heavy timber that densely clothed the lower altitudes of the mountains. On these occasions he would generally have something to show for his trip—an otter or mink taken in his traps, a raccoon skin, a deer, a big-horned owl, shot from his perch in the depths of the forest, a covey of quail caught napping in the lee of some projecting rock, a half grown cub; and not so very infrequently a full grown bear would be toted in on travois poles through the deep snow and the only light thing about that load would be the heart of the youthful hunter. But when supper was over and the long evenings stretched out interminably Bill would throw off his coat, get into his moccasins, drag his book-laden table over to one corner of the huge fire-place, grit his teeth, dig his toes into the rag carpet and sweat blood while his dude school-master put him through Greek and Latin de-clensions, regular and irregular conjugations, rules and their exceptions, translation, composition, and other things, till the cows came home. Then for a change he would switch off into arcs,

tangents, truncated sections, cosines, radii, binomial theorems and much other fierce tommy-rot that lies between the cup and the lip of a candidate for matriculation honors at our universities.

Once or twice during the first six weeks of his martyrdom the desperate youth, after the usual seance was over and he had retired for the night, lay awake all of five or ten minutes deliberating the most plausible pretext for alluring to some inaccessible ravine and there choking and hurling to destruction his pedagogical nemesis. That particular phase of his existence was as evanescent as it was absorbing while it lasted. Before spring, so deadly in earnest was the pupil and so tenacious his memory, he had made such progress that Mr. Dude had to sit up and take notice. He found that when driven to a corner he couldn't draw upon his imagination with the same freedom he at first enjoyed. He commenced to earn his money. All spring and summer Bill plugged away like a six-day tournament rider and by fall concluded he'd make a presentable showing in Dartmouth's football squad.

He passed his examinations all right and his dream of getting on the football team turned out to have been an incontestable hunch. When

one is seventeen—at least he wouldn't be eighteen until the following December—and stands five feet ten in his stockings, weighs 180 pounds without an ounce of superfluous adipose tissue and, when stripped, looks for all the world like the pictures of Hercules as delineated in school mythologies, one isn't very apt to get lost in the shuffle when the powers that be go gunning for gridiron timber. But the dream was doomed to be suddenly and rudely shattered. He hadn't been there three weeks when some breach of etiquette, unintentional on his part but none the less a breach, marked him for discipline by the sophies. The affair came off at the appointed hour; but so many sophomore heads were broken and so many sophomore arms were twisted out of their sockets that the indignant faculty, amazed that such things could be and unanimous in the resolve that a repetition was simply unthinkable, incontinently bounced the innocent, yet from their point of view inexcusable, author of so much sophomoric woe.

However, what Dartmouth lost on the gory grill-ground proved a conspicious gain to the jubilant sons of Old Eli who welcomed the outlaw with wide-open arms. What feats of valor and of strength the prodigy there performed and what forlorn hopes he led to victory, what laurel

chaplets, twined by fair hands graced his not over-modest brow would furnish the theme for a second and modern Aeneid. Suffice it here to say that our hero was during his day the most conspicuous figure, socially and athletically considered, in the university contingent of the Elm City and that his reputation in drinking bouts was all that the most ambitious gridiron nonpareil could desire.

After graduating he went back to the old farm for a year's rest among the mountains. Being an idol of flesh and blood is rather strenuous business, and although his granite physique had stood up under the strain remarkably well young Tempest concluded that tramping the hills awhile with rod and gun and a change to sparkling spring water from the "hot and rebellious" fluids he had been wont to throw into his blood would do him no particular harm. And the correctness of his diagnosis was amply attested by the results. At the end of his pastoral retirement he was fit as a fiddle and longed to get into the game. Accordingly, one fine September morning nearly fifteen months after his graduation, he packed his grip and boarded the train for New York. He was in his twenty-third year, tanned like a Mojave Indian, erect as a crowbar, massive yet agile as an eel, tipped

the scales somewhere around the two-hundred-pound mark, and was physically as fine a specimen of his genus as the Granite or any other state ever turned loose to compete in the cut-throat game of life. The game was all ahead, but it had no terrors for him. Behind a round, smoothly shaven, almost boyish face and ingenuous blue eyes that looked out upon the world with the wide-open candor of a doll's in a china shop, there was an iron will and a cool, calculating brain—the temperament that takes punishment stoically and inflicts it remorselessly.

He had a modest fortune of about $25,000 and that he took along for luck. He was at first undecided whether he would apply for the position of president of some prosperous railroad or run on an independent ticket for mayor of the town. He finally compromised the matter by butting into Columbia university as a law student.

Here his career was smooth and for the most part uneventful. He attended the lectures with commendable regularity, studiously and heroically assimilated the prescribed amount of flimflam, dry rot and other rot, and in general conducted himself with decorum, earnestness and a sobriety unexpected to those familiar with his Yale record. He was a regular attendant at the gymnasium, his superb vitality necessitating some

exhaust valve. Boxing was his favorite exercise but nobody there could stand up under his playful wallops so he took to fencing. There was a young fellow about his own age, Victor Mercereau, with whom he became acquainted. This youth was an all-round athlete, but took special pride in his swordsmanship, which was the real thing, being the result of many years' training under some of the best fencing-masters of Europe where he had received much of his education. He was a New Yorker by birth, his grandfather having been one of the aristocratic refugees who by flight saved their necks from the guillotine at the time of the French revolution. The family had prospered in New York and when Pierre Mercereau, his father, died he was not only proprietor of one of the swellest catering establishments in the metropolis, but a millionaire twice over. Under these circumstances Victor and his sister, Josephine, both of whom had spent half their school days on the Continent, decided to drop the catering business and take life easy. The two young men became a regular Damon-and-Pythias team and Mercereau not only taught his friend the art of fencing but, what was a far more practical service, introduced him to New York's inner circle—to clubdom, to the professional lights, poli-

ticians and statesmen. And, as if this were not enough, he put his friend under a still deeper obligation by introducing him to his sister Josie, a tall, vivacious, highly accomplished and exquisitely beautiful brunette whose many graces of mind and person were further enhanced by the fact that she was a fastidious housekeeper and a positive genius in the culinary art—to say nothing of her ample fortune. It was a case of love at first sight, and after a brief but ardent courtship they were married.

Nothing succeeds like success, and things were certainly coming Bill Tempest's way. The big law student not only took highest honors in his classes, but he was rapidly acquiring a reputation for much forensic ability. In the student debating societies and elsewhere his eloquence, his sonorous voice, commanding presence, resourcefulness, parliamentary skill and grasp of public questions had already marked him as a prodigy and presaged a career at the bar or in politics which need have no bounds but his own ambition.

In due time he was graduated with honors, admitted to the bar and the following autumn, in a whirlwind campaign, marked by strenuous opposition and bitter personalities, was elected to the Assembly on the Republican ticket.

It was in this legislative body that the young Demosthenes learned the difference between theoretical and practical politics. He had read of political machines so powerful that they ground to pulp all opposition, strangled budding initiative and compelled the most servile obedience to their slightest wish—he had read of such things and marveled that slaves could be found so pliant as to submit. He now found himself up against the real article.

At the very outset of his legislative career the wily machine leaders of his party had recognized both his talent and his independence; and to gradually undermine and break down the latter so as to avail themselves of the former was the task they set themselves. To this end the young assemblyman was patronized and deferred to, was placed upon important committees, was wined and dined, lionized and flattered until a weaker head would have been upset. Perhaps his might, too, for he was young and had absorbed a great deal of academic orthodoxy; but the "machinists" proved to be common blacksmiths—they made the fatal mistake of too soon assuming that the lion was tamed, whereas he was only slightly dopey. Having no particularly exalted ideas about the rights of that vague abstraction concretely referred to

as "the people," and looking upon opportunity as the stepping-stone to power, he had more than once upon the floor of the House eloquently and ingeniously defended some flagrant corporation steal—not as a matter of compulsion, but as a matter of course. This emboldened his foxy old political jockeys to groom him for the inner paddock where political races are thrown and winners are picked in advance, where dope is manufactured and deviltry discussed with brutal candor and a callousness beggaring description.

But they had overlooked one blemish: the rugged personal honesty of the neophyte who for mere graft and boodle could no more descend to their infamous level than the waters of Niagara could run back over the precipice. The break came when a smooth railroad lobbyist ran up to Albany with a good fat "roll" and proceeded to lubricate the machine in the interest of a notoriously scandalous bill that was hanging fire in both branches of the Legislature. That settled it. The honorable Bill not only balked at receiving their dirty dollars, but exposed the whole scheme to the newspapers, denouncing it in the Assembly and forcing the lobbyists to get out of town.

Thereafter the honorable Bill was a dead one.

He was ostracized socially; he was deposed from his committee membership and, big as he was, the honorable speaker of the House could never see him when he wished to mix in some of the legislative pow-wows by which Special Privilege acquires still more special and ample privileges.

And when his term was up, his law-making career being thus blighted, he began to study law—and sociological and economic questions as well—from a totally different standpoint than that of most college text books. He became an ardent Socialist, made no effort to practice his profession, but instead wrote a novel intended to shrivel up the whole capitalistic order. The proofsheets had been sent up that morning by his publishers and the accompanying note had begged him to make the final changes and return them by noon of the following day, as a rush of new work necessitated an immediate clearance of work on hand.

* * * * *

As Tempest entered his "den" the clock was striking seven and the wind, which had increased from a moderate blow to a howling gale, drove sharply against the windows the first flakes of a snowstorm that has passed into history as a record-breaker.

CHAPTER II.

The den was delightfully warm and cozy as Tempest entered it with his proofsheets in one hand, his pitcher of punch in the other. Very carefully he set the pitcher down for every drop of that creamy liquid was precious stuff—fit for the gods and those discriminating mortals with godlike tastes and the means to gratify them. A log fire was burning in the fireplace although the hissing steam pipes made it superfluous from any other view than an æsthetic one. This was the author's sanctum, the only place, as he said, where he could find his muse at home. It was where he turned out those muck-raking stories which were snapped up so eagerly by certain capitalistic magazines, and where he composed the socialistic chef d'œuvres disseminated as propaganda wherever Socialism had a foothold. It was up among the gables, being in fact about a third of a very commodious attic, the remaining two-thirds being used as a gymnasium and billiard room.

Pushing over into the nook by the fireplace a low table the novelist deposited thereon the

punch, a jar of tobacco, his old black meerschaum and his work. Then he adjusted to the proper focus his green-shaded electric light, drew up a comfortable chair and proceeded to fill and light his pipe preparatory to getting down to work. But somehow he didn't seem to feel very particularly in the mood for work. It was too comfortable for anything just to sit and smoke and listen to the shrieking and moaning of the wind which had risen to hurricane force and drove before it a swirling and ever-thickening and blinding cloud of snow. He took a long pull at the pitcher. It was so deliciously good he had to take another.

"Now," he said, "I must get to work, by Jupiter;" but he only sat and smoked in ecstasy, dreamily contemplating the fierce jolt his forthcoming novel was going to give the "system." His head dropped lower and lower.

* * * * *

All at once he thought he heard a stamping in the lower hall as if some one were shaking the snow off his boots, followed by a tread on the stairs. Presently the door of his den opened and a stranger entered—a tall, pleasant-faced man of apparently thirty-five years, dressed in a workingman's leather jacket, and knee-length storm boots laced outside corduroy trousers.

"Hello!" the stranger said, "I thought I'd find you in."

"Oh—" began the author, wonderingly, and added graciously, "please bring a chair up to the fire."

"Thanks; it is a rather disagreeable night," remarked the other, accepting the proffered hospitality.

"Now, Comrade Tempest, while you don't know me, I feel as if I had been acquainted with you all my life. Ever since you joined our cause I have regarded you as the natural and logical leader of the Socialist movement. Many other trusty comrades hold the same view. For myself—my name is Stevens, Hartley Stevens, at your service—I am a civil engineer. For the past eight years I have been in the employ of a sub-contractor under the government. Our work for the most part has consisted of repairs, alterations and improvements in connection with the country's coast and interior defenses, always, of course, under the direction of an army engineer. The latter is, by the way, a thoroughly reliable Socialist, being one of the only two officers in the service holding West Point commissions to secretly embrace the cause of the proletariat. There are two or three more, I believe, who won their shoulder-straps from the ranks and who

can be depended upon to side with us whenever our board of strategy shall decide to precipitate the conflict which seems to be—er—shaping up, if I may so express it. But this by way of introduction to what I came to say. Of course I have had exceptional opportunities to acquaint myself with the minutest details of all these fortifications and have prepared drawings supplemented by copious notes; and these I can produce whenever called upon.

"There is a meeting tonight of our board of strategy," went on the engineer after lighting his pipe, "and I have been instructed to inform you of your nomination to its presidency. As you are probably aware the board now consists of twenty-five members, one each from those states numerically strongest in the cause; but this number is shortly to be increased, to include at least one member from each state in the Union. I will inform you that your nomination is unanimous. There are stirring and epoch-marking times ahead and, as this board is supreme and final authority upon all questions of tactics, I need not say, perhaps, that your responsibility will be as weighty as your fame will be enduring, provided we successfully inaugurate our programme."

The speaker paused to knock the ashes from

his pipe, and the nominee—imperturbable, sphinx-like, his steel-blue eyes burning with an inscrutable light and steady as the glow of a locomotive headlight—sat in the semi-shadow cast by the green-shaded incandescent burner, puffed at his black meerschaum and said never a word.

"It is only fair," resumed the comrade, "in view of the responsibilities you are asked to assume, to give you a partial outline of the situation according to latest developments. I will not enlarge upon the many abuses of government which operate to make the lives of the masses an unendurable thing—the impossibility of having an honest count of ballots; the arrogant and of late scarcely disguised partiality of the courts, from lowest to highest, which have one law for the rich and another for the poor; the prohibitive and ever-soaring prices of necessities; the increasing dependence of the state upon the soldiery to shoot contentment into striking workmen, and many other grievances. These things you are familiar with and have vehemently denounced from the lecture platform and in the party press. In other words there is no question as to the desirability of revolution nor even as to the necessity for it—feasibility alone determining our course of action. As to the latter I have to announce that our chances are looking up."

There was an almost imperceptible stiffening of the nominee's spinal column, a faint quiver of the nostrils as of a war-horse scenting distant battle, but the steel-blue eyes burned unwaveringly through the smoke-wreaths as before and—that was all.

"In spite of the fact that all scientific Socialists realize that our world-wide movement is an intellectual one—that you cannot by force compel heterogeneous masses to homogeneous thought and action, even for their own conspicuous and signal advantage—certain obstacles heretofore considered insurmountable have either been overcome or eliminated and the speedy inauguration of the co-operative commonwealth becomes by the logic of events advisable, thus fulfilling, so far as this country is concerned, the historical mission of our party," proceeded the unbidden guest in a matter-of-fact, dispassionate voice. "In the first place I will state that our growth has during the year about to expire been something phenomenal, so that out of a voting population of twenty millions five millions openly advocate the revolutionary cause and work for its success. Of these five millions, according to the most reliable information obtainable, one-half are intelligent, consistent and earnest Social-

ists who know what they want, why they want it and what to do with it after they've got it; while the balance is made up of hot-heads, sore-heads, fire-eaters, chronic antis and victims of the system who noisily demand a change and, having got it, will not improbably give us more trouble than the remaining fifteen millions who actively or passively oppose our principles.

"The standing army, always the bulwark of reactionary interests, has been democratized approximately thirty-three per cent., while the navy is extensively honeycombed by the same principles. At the crucial moment these comrades, being at all times in touch with their civilian brothers, can be depended upon to greatly cripple the capitalist programme.

"There is not in the whole country an arsenal or powder magazine, public or private, in which we have not at least one trusty comrade——"

A chuckle that sounded like "good" seemed to come from the center of a cloud of tobacco smoke.

"I beg your pardon—" said the comrade.

"On the contrary it is I who beg yours," declared the nominee. "Pray proceed, Mr. Stevens."

"In all the gun and ammunition factories, big

and little, where light and heavy ordnance, machine guns and army equipment are turned out our spies are employed and we receive frequent report of the output and disposition of the product. In fact our system covers every branch of the military service.

"Moreover in the Socialist colony our inventors have been busy. To my own brother, a young chemist of promise, belongs the credit of discovering an explosive ten thousand times as powerful as anything heretofore known to the world. So fearful is its composition that it is said a five-gallon jar of it contains enough kinetic force, properly confined, to split Manhattan Island from east to west as by a terrific earthquake. But more important than all the rest, to my mind, is the perfection of a tiny submarine boat which has by actual test remained thirty-six hours under water, during which time it covered more than twelve hundred miles. With half a dozen of these boats and a supply of cartridges made of the new explosive, which we have named *sizmos,* a few bold comrades could go out and within thirty minutes after getting within range sink the biggest navy afloat."

With a bound Tempest was on his feet. "Count me in on this, comrade," he said. "Use

me as you will—I am ready to lead or follow—but in any case the co-operative commonwealth is looming large on the horizon. Now, old man, there are just about two good bumpers left in this pitcher. Here's to the cause! May the goal of Socialists never pirouette any farther away than it appears to me at this identical, blessed instant!"

In silence they drank the toast. The engineer glanced at the clock which was on the point of striking nine.

"Come," he said, "the comrades wait for your answer. It is only a dozen blocks down to the hall. We selected it for this meeting because the neighborhood is a quiet one and, besides, it is near your home. We consulted your convenience in everything but the weather, and that we could not foresee."

"Pray, do not mention it," rejoined the other, drawing on a pair of storm boots. "I'm from the White mountains where the weather clerk puts up the real thing in the way of snow storms."

The place chosen for this Christmas election by the Socialist Strategy Board was soon reached, notwithstanding the driving snow, and they were ushered into the presence of the comrades upon whose shoulders rested the grave respon-

sibility, whether for weal or woe, of the coming revolution. Bill Tempest knew them all, personally or by reputation, and his entrance was the signal for a subdued, but enthusiastic ovation. The very atmosphere was surcharged with portentous things. The throbbing undercurrent of revolt was in the blood, the intoxication born of crises brightened the eyes, the exhilaration inspired by action marked the bearing of those determined spirits who plotted the overthrow of the old order of things.

In that group of twenty-five, composed about equally as to number of workmen and so-called "intellectuals," one beheld the executive wisdom and force of a party five millions strong. There was Benton Ordway, formerly mining engineer and prospector and later a multi-millionaire who founded the famous Karl Marx university of New York which furnished free instruction in manual training, technical and scientific studies, and all the higher branches taught in modern college curricula. This institution he generously backed with his millions and his abounding satisfaction consisted, to use his own phrase, of the "run" he got for his money—ninety-nine out of every hundred students becoming loyal Socialists and indefatigable workers for the cause.

Swale Oldrem was another who had left his own economic class to fight the battles of the proletariat. This blond giant of forty-five, of Danish ancestry but American born, should by all known rules and precedents have been indifferent to the struggles of the class out of which his father had been hoisted by an erratic turn of fortune that sent skyward the value of certain supposedly worthless tracts of Western realty. But Swale didn't go by rule. He was a born revolutionist—less, perhaps, from a desire to assist those who made no effort to assist themselves than from an innate hatred of oppression, injustice and tyranny. He particularly despised the insufferable cant and hypocrisy by which, in the name of morality, religion and the law, the specially privileged few held in check, robbed and exploited the many. The ethical code that dealt out extravagant punishment to the petty offender and merely nominal punishment to the wholesale criminal was not at all to his liking. Wherefore his militant socialism.

Then there was Hank Glidden, at one time president of the American Federation of Labor. He was by treachery sent to join the Down-and-Out club, but he got his political bearings through that upheaval and had since fought the battles of his class from the only class-conscious plat-

form. It was a cold day for the capitalistic crowd when they scalped Hank. His personal popularity from coast to coast and intimate knowledge of the ropes enabled him to disillusion many thousands of trades unionists who once were accustomed to sit up nights and worry about politics getting into the unions.

Ollie Preston was another strategist of the first magnitude. He was a college professor who parted his hair in the middle, and threw a fit if the creases in his trousers were the millionth part of an inch out of plumb, but he was a Johnny-on-the-spot with the unshrinkable goods. Under the nom de plume of "Maxim" he was a tireless and most prolific writer of the stuff that capitalistic nightmares are made of, turning out plays, novels, poems, squibs and broadsides with an energy that was remarkable. College men, editors and critics recognized the quality of those savage attacks upon a tottering system and racked their memories for some chance clew to the writer; and many an innocent alumnus who had at some unguarded moment in his career exhibited recondite symptoms of the divine afflatus was compelled to furnish an alibi. But the presses worked on and the identity of the writer was as baffling a mystery as ever.

Herbert Johnson, the millionaire foundryman,

who for twenty years had conducted his enormous business on the co-operative plan; Pembroke George, once a famous Populist editor; Vance Roeder, handy man, detective and spy; Cash Humboldt, veteran organizer and orator; Conway Dunham, army and navy propagandist; Paul Devoe, astronomer, and David (otherwise "Happy") Hooligan, the Catholic priest unfrocked for "pernicious activity," politically and in disobedience of papal authority: were among the assembled strategists.

The chairman rapped for order. "The only unfinished business before this meeting is the election of a permanent president of our board of strategy," he said. "Comrade Tempest has been informed of his unanimous nomination to the highest office in the gift of the party; he is present and can speak for himself. Mr. Tempest, the board awaits your pleasure."

Slowly, with a thousand memories of the past and a thousand hopes for the future crowding to the front, the nominee drew off his great-coat, threw it over a chair and advanced to the low platform.

"Mr. Chairman and Comrades of the Revolution," he said, "I thank you for this signal honor which, from now until the inauguration of the co-operative commonwealth and the popular elec-

tion of a new strategy board confers upon the recipient the actual executive and administrative duties of this mighty nation of one hundred million people; for the powerless puppet who sits in Washington, blind leader of a blinded and fatuous multitude, his rudderless ship of state a plaything of the tides, is only the counterfeit of authority.

"A few short years ago our party was the butt and scorn of bourgeois traffickers and politicians. Today with fear and trembling they hug their idols in the market-place; and tomorrow is house-cleaning day.

"Standing tonight on the boundary line which separates the old order of society, with its cruel philosophy that decreed that the few should wax powerful by exploiting the many, and the new order which discriminates against none and uplifts all; and while appreciating the tremendous responsibility involved in the forcible expropriation of the national wealth: I am nevertheless dominated by one devouring passion and only one—a boundless elation, a joy unspeakable!

"For the first time in our history the Socialists of America are in a position to seize the reins of government and we should be cravens indeed were we to permit the opportunity to find us wavering in resolution. If no man may read

the future, if the clouds behind which the destiny of the earth-race is hidden from our view are dark and full of unimaginable portent—all we can say is that the past has not been so rose-strewn nor is the present so bright with promise that we should on that account prolong the hideous force of capitalistic rule.

"If the theory of Socialism be the dream of intellectuals, must it therefore be impractical? We know what industrial competition is—it is war; and war is exactly what a soldier not unknown to fame said it was. How many myriads of victims this useless and unnatural competitive warfare has claimed in bygone centuries none can say. Enough that ours is the task of staying the juggernaut of commercialism and that the hour approaches.

"Comrades, there have been moments in history when whole nations have been entranced by the glittering and specious promise of some royal alchemist or some political mountebank. The populace sang, wept, prayed and shouted for joy—and the days ran into weeks and the weeks dragged into months and the light of hope faded out of their eyes and they discovered that human promises were brittle, that earthly paradise was as distant as before. But I declare to you in all seriousness that the moment the

co-operative commonwealth is inaugurated in the United States—that moment the whole of christendom and the whole of heathendom can take a day off and rejoice. There will be no more wars of conquest nor the wiping out of weak nations just because they are weak and defenseless. We will attend to all that. Do you realize that we can, when we get fairly under way, turn out at least two monster battleships for every day in the year! We could put a million men at the task, if need be, or twice that number. What is the obvious result? Why, every nation on the face of the globe is driven, willy nilly, into the camp of Socialism. And what then? Well, to my mind, there would then be about as much need for warships as there would for warts or the measles. Their purpose having been accomplished we could melt them up into bridges, structural iron and frying pans.

"So much for the international aspect of the situation. Coming back to our own problems, I have always been amused at the persistency and stress with which nearly all Socialists harp on the bread-and-butter side of the question. Now, please do not stare at me as if I were a freak from Mars or from some other out-of-the-way region. I understand perfectly well the meaning of economic determinism, the material-

istic conception of history, so indissolubly bound and interwoven with the fabric of our philosophy. So far from having any quarrel with that interpretation I recognize it as the absolutely correct one and so declare it; but what I cannot understand is why so many of the comrades seem to imagine that the co-operative commonwealth will have fulfilled its beneficent mission when, at a trifling expenditure of labor, each inhabitant thereof shall have been provided daily with three—or more if he wants them—square meals of the best food that the earth affords, together with certain other merely personal comforts. These things are the incidents, not the ends, of Socialism. Of course everybody will have the best that this green old planet affords, and that is far more than even the rich can have nowadays, because nobody is trying to produce the best; whereas under co-operation everything will be produced under expert supervision and cheapness, adulteration and inferiority will be undreamed of.

"I need not at this time dwell upon the vast changes and improvements inevitably destined to follow the change of system further than to say that whereas man has hitherto confined his efforts (and with conspicuous success, it must be confessed) to turning this fair domain into

the very abomination of desolation, the task of the co-operative commonwealth is plainly to undo the havoc, as far as may be, and re-create on a scale of grandeur and gorgeousness unthought of by, because impossible to, competitive societies.

"Transportation problems are first in importance after the daily necessities of the people shall have been provided for and I trust you will not consider me hopelesssly utopian when I declare it not only possible, but necessary, that within the next few years our two oceans be joined by several four-track transcontinental lines of railroad, straight as a die, practically at sea level grade the entire distance, and having a speed of four or five hundred miles an hour. This can be done; and what can be done should and will be done.

"Of scarcely secondary importance are our highways, millions of miles of which must be built—of solid masonry, below the frost-line, indestructible as the granite hills—at once utilitarian in the highest degree, of superlative beauty and a lasting monument to the days when things are doing.

"The cities and towns of our country do not conform to the standard of excellence characteristic of the needs and fulfilling the aspirations

of a free and altruistic people. It will be easier to destroy and rebuild than to patch up present defects. Therefore their destruction would seem advisable.

"Our rivers and harbors, mountains, forests, parkways, lakes and historic beauty spots will all be treated on a scale of magnificence befitting the Co-operative Commonwealth of America; and I will further say that while it may sound like the boast of an idle dreamer to claim that this far-reaching economic upheaval and expropriation of the national resources can be effected without the shedding of innocent blood, I am sure there need be no carnival of slaughter to handicap our programme or to rest accusingly upon those of us who are afflicted with what may be called the orthodox conscience, for want of a more descriptive term. Those who have no dangerous weapons can use none, and it should be our first duty to assemble and guard, or else destroy, all public and private military stores, small arms and equipment that we cannot use. This policy should be general.

"In conclusion, and thanking you for your attention, I announce myself ready to lead or follow during the crucial reorganization days ahead. If you are still determined to honor me with the presidency of this board I will

accept the post, relying on you and a clear-headed rank and file to pull me through—always subject to my resignation should the time come when we can no longer agree. I appreciate the regard of the comrades, the flattering compliment to my self-esteem—I must confess to a certain degree of vanity—and I also appreciate the responsibility of a leadership which carries with it not only the hostility of three-fourths of our own population, but the fierce antagonism of all the governments of the world, which will immediately head in our direction their most formidable battleships and the pick of their fighting legions. And the last word of their divine rulers as these armored and turreted dogs of war gather, like harpies, for the feast of the Occident, will be the short and savage command, snarled from throats hoarse with rage, 'Eat 'em up, Jack!' From all this notoriety of chieftainship I do not retreat and toward it I do not advance. If any member of the executive board desires this sinecure now is his time to speak. If you are still unanimous I will serve you with the best that in me lies."

With a muffled roar Swale Oldrem, the "Great Dane," sprang to his feet, and, congratulating the board, the cause, himself and everybody else, gripped the hand of the new president and the

rest of the board followed suit.

An hour of discussion followed during which the question of tactics was threshed over, reports of local and field secretaries compared, a new cypher code examined and adopted and the suggestions of the president listened to. Incidentally the first of May was the time set for the overthrow of the capitalistic regime and all realized that the intervening weeks would be busy ones, all too short in fact, for the enormous amount of work devolving upon the strategy board.

It was midnight when the meeting broke up, the comrades by twos and threes making their way back down town as best they might.

CHAPTER III.

It was the middle of April and only two weeks more of the competitive whirlpool remained for the historical republic of the United States. As she had in bygone days set the example for France and other older and younger nations by establishing a government free from many of the abuses of royalty-ridden countries, so now she was again to blaze the trail for democracy the world over although, paradox of paradoxes! she would have vehemently and incredulously flouted the soft impeachment.

On the streets and in the marts of metropolitan traffic men were greedily and fatuously chasing the almighty dollar, as of yore, ostensibly to solve the perplexing problem of existence in an unkind world, but actually and inevitably, in accordance with economic law, to swell to still more unwieldly proportions fortunes already colossally vast. Crime was rampant, widespread and ever on the increase; hospitals and jails were full to overflowing; on the faces of aimless armies of the unemployed, of the dissolute idle, of the disinherited and chron-

ic slum dwellers, of the hordes of native toilers displaced by cheaper foreign populations and by child-labor, of the throngs that waited in front of employment offices, municipal and private: there rested a sullen apathy not unmixed with dull wonder that such things could be. And, as if bent upon playing into the hands of the revolutionists, albeit unconsciously, scores of large manufacturers, east and west, having run their plants day and night all winter and for no apparent reason except to convince themselves and others that the country was extremely prosperous, and being confronted in the spring with huge surplus stocks in the warehouses, a falling market and but little demand, closed their factory doors with a bang and emulated the example of the renowned Mr. Micawber —thus adding to the general feeling of insecurity and discontent and causing the prosperity doctors to work overtime prescribing and ladling out their precious dope to a public already sick and growing sicker as the days wore on.

Only that very week in the national House a congressman had introduced a bill which authorized the government to commence at once the construction of a military road along the Atlantic seaboard, provisions being made for

the employment of a hundred thousand men; and another member of the same body had fathered a measure in behalf of the idle multitudes which committed the government to the innovation of building five hundred miles of railroad as an experiment in national ownership, the road to be extended at the option of Congress; and still another representative, wise in his generation, with rolling eyes and foaming jaws (he probably had a piece of soap concealed in his mouth) attempted to manufacture a sentiment in favor of war—instant, to the death and no quarter asked nor given—just because some unimportant functionary in one of the South American republics, when in his cups and in keeping with a perennial custom of theirs, had called us a nation of Yankee pigs. But all these relief measures fell flat and nothing was done. But still the "Yankee pigs" pursued without ceasing the illusive Yankee dollar, the kings of frenzied finance continued to play their time-honored game of bluff with nobody audacious enough to call their hands—and the gaunt spectre of poverty looked in at the windows of a million gloomy homes.

* * * * *

Just off Broadway, some blocks south of Canal street, was the old established printing

house of Trainor and Sons. It occupied the entire four floors and basement of the large brick building with the exception of a haberdashery which flaunted its wares in a narrow room on the ground floor, on the side nearest to Broadway, and running the whole length of the building. The elder Trainor, founder of the business, had been dead some years and his two sons continued to run the plant until Alfred was killed in a western train wreck leaving Harry, the younger brother, sole proprietor. This young man, being a practical printer, as had been his father and brother, had once upon a time sat at the keyboard of a Mergenthaler machine and pounded out so many pages of a standard and voluminous work on Socialism that the ethics and the philosophy of the under-dog had got into his blood and thenceforth he was one of the elect, or, as Fra Elbertus would probably put it, vibrated to the same keynote. From all which it came about that the Socialist Strategy Board, casting to windward for a safe and quiet anchorage for its headquarters, had selected this innocent appearing spot which was, in the hopelessly cockneyized slang of one enthusiastic comrade, a printer who worked on the premises, "a bloomin' peach of a plaice for a Socialist l'yout."

Here, in one corner of the big basement, partitioned off from the ponderous presses and having its own private entrance from the haberdashery which was, of course, run by Socialists, the board could meet secure from interruption and plan the final moves before springing the Socialist coup d'etat. All about was the roar and jar of machinery, the hammering of metal forms on the floor above, the tramp of many feet, the rumbling of passing trucks. The members could by crowding close together hear themselves; but by no possibility could anybody else hear them and the public character of the establishment, the large number of employees, the many patrons and strangers constantly coming and going, together with its numerous entrances and exits, all contributed to render the location ideal for the purpose. But the board was taking no chances on a fiasco or the premature forcing of its hand. Not only was every printer who worked on the lower floors a comrade, but the policeman on that beat was a Socialist and two trusty "spotters" besides had the building under constant surveillance, ready to give instant warning of any suspicious move on the part of the authorities.

However, nothing occurred to disturb their

possession, while uniformly gratifying reports by the scouts and party workers continued to pour in from north, east, south and west. So strongly organized was the party where it most needed strength, that is, among the erstwhile flunkeys of capitalism—in the national capital, in all the large cities, on railroad, steamship and other transportation lines, in the army and navy, in the big telegraph and telephone companies and so-called public service corporations,—that it seemed for once that all the gods were piking for the cause of the proletariat, although that innocent casus belli, the said proletariat himself, was never farther away from, if never nearer to, accepting the principles of Socialism than he was in the swiftly passing days that presaged the doom of capitalism.

For once plutocracy had run up against something that money wouldn't buy. Out of the five million Socialists in the United States there were at least one hundred thousand who knew, who necessarily had to know, almost as much about the plans for the revolution as the strategy board itself, because upon these trusted lieutenants would fall the task, in every nook and corner of the republic, of deliberately precipitating chaos and then of intelligently and masterfully restoring order in the shortest pos-

sible time. To insure the country against needless suffering and to provide for simultaneous and decisive action it was necessary for the strategy board, weeks and months in advance of the contemplated coup, to communicate its tactics in detail and personally or by delegate to every comrade deputized for local leadership. And so unerring was the judgment of the board and its several executive branches that not one of all those numerous deputies had betrayed his cause although wealth beyond the dream of avarice could have been his for the treachery. And this is not all. Many hundred thousands besides these deputies awaited with longing eyes and hopeful hearts the hour of their economic freedom which, by infallible evidence, they knew was drawing near though they could not with certainty declare the psychological moment. But if any babbling tongue, unloosed by frequent mugs of foaming beer, wagged unguardedly it was by the enemy credited to the idle vaporings of an overheated imagination.

One afternoon President Tempest was alone at headquarters. It was nearly four o'clock and he had just told his secretary, a young fellow named Burbank, that he might go out on Broadway and cool his heels for an hour. The

majority of the board was scattered around town, some members were out of town and four or five were on a still hunt in the West and South. According to the latest developments everything was shaping up beautifully. As he sat at his desk smoking, and for the hundredth time trying to imagine some contingency for which the collective wisdom of the board had not provided the private door was opened and in sauntered Vic Mercereau, very handsome, very swagger, and looking, for all the world, as if he had just stepped out of some Fifth avenue fashion plate instead of having just arrived from a trip which had taken him three-quarters around the world and back.

"Comment ce va?" inquired the young man, nonchalantly, but the iron grip of his slender fingers belied his indifferent air as his leader arose and welcomed him with a heartiness that left nothing to be desired.

"Finely, Vic, old boy! Everything seems to be cut and dried to order. And you?—sit down and tell me all about it—heaven knows how soon somebody'll come poking in. A half hour now is worth a half day with every Tom, Dick and Harry on the board butting in and interrupting."

"Well," said Mercereau, "all the comrades

across the pond send fraternal greetings and best wishes for our success, of course. Some of the leaders I may describe as jubilant, others lukewarm and still others cold as a polar iceberg, professing, by some clairvoyance, which I did not even try to fathom, to see in our attempt to seize evolution by the horns and force her gait nothing but catastrophic failure and a windup in disaster which will set back a thousand years the cause of international Socialism. It's all according to the viewpoint. However, I didn't consider it necessary to set forth all the advantages possessed by the comrades over here; and I can see a reason for their pessimism is they base their arguments upon conditions as they exist in Europe today. I told them, though, to allow something for Yankee ingenuity, to keep cool, and above all, to keep Socialists off any warships leaving Europe to take a hand in the scrimmage. Of course all known or suspected Socialists would be left behind, anyway; but I wanted to make sure that none of the comrades paid his respects to Davy Jones through my neglect to give him fair warning."

"What did Castleman say?"

"Oh, he and his precious Committee of Ten were rather skittish at first of our ability to de-

liver the goods, but later they warmed up to the idea and wanted to send over by steamer a few thousand huskies to help us put down the plutes. I thanked them with becoming effusiveness, informed them we had the situation well in hand and in return for their kindness promised that when we had the co-operative commonwealth in good running order we'd reciprocate by landing on British soil two hundred thousand Socialistic nurses, if the honorable committee thought it would take that many, to subdue and sit on Edward VII. while the essence of democracy was being administered to him in good old fashioned allopathic doses."

"By the Triangular Trinity! that's what we will," murmured President Bill, approvingly. "But what did Meyerhoff think, Victor, and what headway is the cause making in the Fatherland?"

"I should say it was a case of nip and tuck between the German comrades and their crazy war-lord, with the odds slightly favoring divine rights. The comrades have the numbers and the ballots, but the war-lord has the church, the state and the bullets—not to mention the counting of the ballots which he does by an arithmetic of his own. This is the superficial view. Looking beneath the surface one finds confidence,

courage, solidarity. The army is fifty per cent. socialized, the foundations of class government are crumbling and soon the reveille of the new order will awaken the bourgeoisie to the fact that their rule is over."

"Did you go to St. Petersburg?"

"No; I met Revenski at Geneva. Say, Bill, those Russians can give us cards and spades when it comes to self-abnegation, martyrdom and such things. The sacrifices they make, the chances they take, are something appalling. We couldn't do that sort of thing over here. It's in the Russian make-up to perform spectacular, dare-devil feats. For myself, while I do not hold that a live coward is necessarily better than a dead hero, I do contend that a live hero is worth more, whether to himself or a given cause, than either or both the others. Well, I made Revenski insanely happy by disclosing to him the formula of *sizmos,* and if the world doesn't soon read of the damnedest popping, rocking, crashing and splintering ever recorded in the history of the Romanoff or any other dynasty you can call me a pipe-hitter. Every paper I pick up I expect to read that the Little Father, accompanied by his palace, his royal retinue of flunkies, ministers, grand viziers, plenipotentiaries, Cossacks and other impedimenta, have set off on a sudden,

if not entirely unexpected, journey to the planet Mars."

"Here's hoping he'll have a pleasant trip," piped in the president.

"The Italian comrades were transported to the seventh heaven of delight and wanted to show their sympathy the first of May by blowing up the Quirinal, scuttling warships in the harbor, red fire, parades, incendiary speeches and I don't know what other crazy antics. I entreated them to cut it all out, pledging them the assistance of the new commonwealth, and attempted to explain the far-reaching consequences our revolution would have upon the present alignment of world-powers. They were too excited, I fear, to appreciate my brand of logic, but they have doubtless come back to earth by this time."

Then the talk shifted over to Japan where, although the government was semi-Socialistic, that political half-and-half was about as strong a tonic as the stomachs of the Samurai lords could bear. Anything more Socialistic than that —that is to say, more Marxian—had to thrive, if thrive at all it could, under the cover of darkness and under imperial proscription.

They were discussing the situation in France, the probable effect of the Separation act and other matters, when Ollie Preston, Cash Hum-

boldt and "Happy" Hooligan came in. After warmly greeting Mercereau, who as deputy-at-large had been abroad since the first of the year, the new comrades joined in the talkfest.

"I'm gratified to observe that the French have at last knocked out Napoleon's old Concordat," remarked Hooligan, the ex-priest. Ever since his falling out with Rome and his subsequent excommunication, accompanied by a string of anathema a mile long, the whilom priest had been a vigorous and bitter assailant of the church, its authority and everything bearing the sacerdotal brand.

"Give 'em hell, Happy," encouraged Humboldt, lighting a cigar and settling back in his chair for a season of solid comfort.

"Next to Americans," went on Hooligan, "the French people are the easiest marks in the world. I can't conceive of a time when they weren't being bled, bilked, soaked, hamstrung or hornswoggled by something or somebody. If it wasn't the state it was the church; if it wasn't the church it was the aristocracy; and when it was neither of these it was a Law springing a South Sea bubble on them or a De Lesseps going after their buried hoards. They always were good things and their latest break is the worst of the lot. What d'you think of Russian bonds

for a good safe investment? Well, well—it doesn't matter, so far as the money is concerned—money will soon be relegated to the limbo of forgotten things; but superstition and credulity cannot be so easily put away."

"Superstitution!" cried Humboldt, "what's the matter with you, Happy? Don't you know the French are the most atheistic and up-to-date people on earth?"

"I speak not of Parisians and intellectuals," said the ex-priest, "but of the peasantry and artisans who make up the bulk of the population—who are the real France."

"No excuse for them," declared Humboldt, "didn't they have their Voltaire?"

"Good Lord!" said Mercereau, "they don't read Voltaire—the priests would flay 'em alive."

"They wouldn't do anything else," asserted Hooligan, "know how it is myself."

"No more do they read Diderot!" chimed in Preston; "we're apt to think that ours is the only practical and materialistic age, but wasn't it Diderot who, nearly two centuries ago, talked about hanging the last king with a rope made from the bowels of the last priest?"

"Search me," said Humboldt, "but if it was I herewith pronounce Diderot the real, unadulterated goose-quill."

"These young gentlemen are friends of mine, pupils of Marx university," said Ordway, "and I will undertake to answer for their circumspection and otherwise decorous behavior."

"So—" said the ex-priest with twinkling eyes and dropping his menacing air, "students of Marx university, eh? That is excellent. Now, young gentlemen, tell me—I would fain put your instruction to the test—tell me when is a republic not a republic?"

Swift as a liner off the bat came the answer from the student nearest him: "About next week, I should fancy."

"Good!" roared Hooligan, "you are a credit to your alma mater. Next—what do you say, young man?"

Thus appealed to, the second lad without hesitation shot this one out: "A republic is not a republic when it's a co-operative commonwealth."

"Hear, hear!" cried the delighted Irishman. "Now, sir, it's your turn."

The third lad redeemed himself with: "A republic cannot be considered a republic when it is a Standard Oilgarchy."

"By heavens! Ordway, that school for scandal of yours is worth the money," declared Hooligan, and he was turning away to greet one of the members who had just come in. But

he was not to escape so easily. It was his turn to dance on the gridiron for, with one accord and not to be denied, three vigorous young throats demanded, "What is the answer?"

"Oh, pish, tush!" he complained querulously, dropping unconsciously into the brogue, "can't ye lave an old man be? 'Twas only an extimporaneous idea that popped into me head and anny wan o'ye has got me beaten by a mile. Howiver, the essence of me cogitation was that a republic was no longer a republic when the chief republicans and stand-patters descinded to the hard lines of havin' to go to work for a livin'." And to the shrill whistling that none but lusty undergraduates can execute to perfection and the tumultuous stamping of three noisy pairs of feet, Hooligan beat an undignified retreat.

Singly, by twos and threes, the members straggled in until headquarters swarmed with strategists. By eight o'clock, when the president and Mercereau returned from dinner, there were nearly eighty assembled out of a total of a hundred and the scene resembled a metropolitan ward-room the night before election. They stood or were seated in groups of half a dozen or more, animatedly talking, laughing, shouting, gesticulating, trying to make themselves understood above the racket within and the din and jar of

machinery without. It was Saturday night, the 27th, and was the last general meeting of the board, the most of whom had planned to leave town by late trains that night or early ones Sunday morning en route for their several posts of duty in distant and nearby states. A stranger would have taken them for a lodge of some fraternal order having a grand reunion and pow-wow instead of a band of determined conspirators plotting to overthrow, inside of a week, one of the putatively strongest governments on the face of the earth. But the hour for doubts and fears had gone by, had given place to confidence. Organization, tireless effort, an almost fanatic zeal for the cause had surmounted every difficulty, so far as human judgment could forecast, and nothing remained but to await with hopeful hearts the ripening of the fateful hour for action. Why should not they be jubilant? And the undercurrent of responsibility inevitably pervading momentous undertakings was evidenced by the momentary sadness, the hush that fell upon the group when from time to time some comrade, compelled to take a train for the West or South, made the rounds with sobered countenance saying his adios until they should meet again under the flag of the new commonwealth.

It was past 9:30 when the telephone boy rushed over to the president and whispered something in his ear.

"Get down to Park Row as quickly as you can and hurry back the minute the papers are on the street," directed the president, and the boy set off on his errand.

"What's up, Bill?" inquired Mercereau, making his way across the room.

"They say Russia has gone up. The rumor is just in and the papers are running off an extra."

"A-a-ah!" said Mercereau. It was probably twenty minutes before the boy came back with the extra. The president picked up a megaphone and, while the board crowded around as closely as they conveniently could, read in his sonorous voice the following cable despatch:

> St. Petersburg, April 27th—The long expected revolution has burst with unparalleled fury over the Russian empire. The royal palace of Tsarskoe-Selo, apparently dynamited in a hundred places at once, lies a hopeless mass of ruins which the flames, fanned by a furious wind, are devouring. The czar, the czarina, the heir apparent and the royal princesses, the premier and several other cabinet ministers, together with at least two hundred officers, guards and palace attendants, are all reported buried in

the ruins. In the city anarchy, pandemonium and terrorism reign unchecked and property holders are fleeing for their lives. Every nearby fort, arsenal, barracks or other military stronghold has been blown up or captured by the Reds; and thousands of soldiers, Cossacks, municipal guards, police, including the "Emperor's Own" household regiment, have been slaughtered like oxen in the shambles.

And the saturnalia has only commenced. With deafening crashes, comparable to nothing but the prophetic Day of Judgment, with detonations that shake the whole city and its suburbs public buildings, storehouses and the homes of the rich are being projected into the air with volcanic force, the debris raining over inconceivable areas, killing and maiming thousands of people, including many of the frenzied terrorists themselves.

As if to add to the horror of the situation fires have broken out in numerous places and this alone, coupled with bursting water mains and the disorganization of the fire department, assures the doom of the ancient capital on the Neva.

These are but incidents; in the widespread wrack and ruin the stoutest hearts are appalled and reason totters on her throne. Prison doors are being burst open everywhere and hordes of desperate criminals, mingling with the riff-raff of the capital, vandals, ghouls, hoodlums, and all

the forces of anarchy, are surging in living streams through the business section, looting banks, stores, wineries and vodka shops, pillaging, destroying, wrecking all before them without let or hindrance.

From Moscow, Odessa, Warsaw and numerous other large cities there came, an hour ago, frantic appeals for aid; but the wires have been cut and——

The abrupt ending of the despatch indicated that the same fate had befallen the operator's own wire.

The reading of the cablegram was followed by no demonstration on the part of the comrades who were themselves so soon to kindle the fires of revolution.

Vic Mercereau listened to the reading as one in a dream. He stood motionless, erect, head thrown back, his dark eyes straining with a fixedness that was almost hypnotic—as if he had annihilated distance and was gazing straight into that wretched northland whose spectacular downfall he had, at least, been instrumental in hastening.

The president walked over and tapped him lightly on the shoulder. "Come out of it," he advised; "what do you think?"

Mercereau shook himself back to earth with an effort.

"Bill, old man," he said, "when tyrants sow the wind they should not be inordinately disappointed if they reap the whirlwind."

CHAPTER IV.

One—two — three — four — five — six—seven —eight—nine—ten—eleven—twelve! It was the first of May. Throughout the length and breadth of the republic one man in every four was alert and on the move as the clocks in the towers finished striking the hour of midnight. In all the metropolitan centers, in the many thousand cities, towns, villages and hamlets, wherever there was a law and a political machine to enforce it, from the District of Columbia to the remotest frontier collection of shanties—the darkness of early morning was vibrant with the tread of armed men and the law, as people had known it, was declared null and void. And as the old law had been backed by force of arms whenever and wherever opposition had shown its teeth, whether in local settlement, township, or nation at large: so, in like manner, was the new law. There is no other way and there can be no other way until men are unanimous. Whether majorities or minorities make the law, and whether the same are cruel or wisely beneficent, the power to enforce them must inhere,

else the law becomes a mockery. Laws do not enforce themselves. That the new law was as yet engraved in the hearts of determined men instead of being engrossed upon statute books was a matter extraneous and immaterial, provided its sponsors had the ability to enforce it. And the basis of the new law was expropriation: of the land and all that was upon it, of all the tools of production and distribution and whatever was used in common and necessary for the common weal; and as the old rule in regard to eating a hare was to first catch or otherwise obtain possession of the hare likewise, in enforcing the new law of expropriation, it became necessary to first obtain possession of the requisite force to effect exproporiation. One instance in kind may serve as the prototype of thousands of others taking place simultaneously, or approximately so, all the way from Maine to California.

Not a thousand miles from New York was a government fort manned by four companies of infantry and their regular complement of officers, the whole force being under command of a major-general. Something more than a third of the enlisted men being Socialists-militant, the modus operandi was substantially as follows:

At a quarter past one o'clock a band of two

hundred comrades, Captain Lantz of Marx university military battalion commanding, assembled before the massive outer gates and gave the prearranged signal. Instantly the gates swung open admitting them to the grounds and a sentry, his tall form silhouetted against the skyline, demanded the countersign. In another moment Captain Lantz was interrogating the sentry.

'Have you assembled all the available arms, ammunition and equipment?"

"Yes, sir," was the reply, "all is under guard in the gun-room. The machine guns are drawn up in front of the barracks, the heavy mounted pieces have been relieved of breech-blocks and nothing bigger than a pocket knife is loose around the fort."

"Good—is the guard-house big enough to hold all the Philistines?"

"Yes, sir, easily."

"Then," said the Captain, "in they go. Let us proceed."

In double column of fours the company marched to the front of the barracks where the rest of the comrades, one hundred and fifty strong, were drawn up under arms.

The sergeant in command advanced and saluted. "Captain," he said, "these are all revolutionaries and represent our force, with the

exception of a dozen or so guarding equipments. We await your orders."

"You may remain here for the present. I will use my men to subdue your fractious messmates."

Somebody switched on the lights and while a band of armed strangers came tramping into the barracks sleeping soldiers sprang from their bunks in swarms, only to be met with menacing bayonets and even more menacing looks.

"You are all under arrest," declared Captain Lantz with matter-of-fact directness. "Every man will take his clothes and blankets and march to the guard-house. Fall in!"

Taken thus at a disadvantage most of the bewildered soldiers did as they were ordered, the few who objected receiving such unkind prods that they hastened after the rest. In less time than it takes to tell it they were all under guard.

"Now," remarked Captain Lantz with satisfaction, as he marched his company back to the barracks, "I think the enemy is ours."

But at this juncture he was made aware that all opposition had not yet been squelched. Some soldier had eluded his captors in the darkness and alarmed the officers who, in all stages of neglige, came rushing upon the scene of trouble. The doughty general in command, a crimson-beaked, corpulent individual of extraordinary

ferocity and pomposity of demeanor, led the way followed closely by his subalterns. The full moon, breaking at that moment through a bank of clouds, shed her serene effulgence over the scene — the mutinous regulars in their army uniforms, the citizen soldiery in their buff-and red-trimmed military trappings, the wicked looking machine guns surrounded by a circle of as determined and class-conscious rebels as ever balked authority to a standstill.

One contemptuous glance the general vouchsafed the group in strange uniforms. Then he roared: "Captain French, unlimber those Gatlings and give this —— —— mob what is coming to it."

Before the officer could even attempt to execute the order Captain Lantz stepped forward.

"Your orders, sir," he said, "are no longer of consequence around here. In the name of the Co-operative Commonwealth of America I have taken possession of this fort. I am in command and as two commanders would be—er—superfluous, you may consider yourself at liberty to retire."

The general's red face turned to purple, then to black, as he wildly clutched at his throat to keep his rising gorge from choking him. No more helpless and pitiful object in human form

could well be imagined. Captain Lantz thought he would surely die of apoplexy, but he came out of his fit white, haggard, trembling. Then he got his second wind and, filling the air with a string of oaths that fully attested his proficiency in that line of a soldier's duty, leaped upon his subordinate officer and felled him with one blow of his powerful fist.

"Coward!" he panted, "traitor! When I give an order I expect to have it obeyed. And you (to the troopers) get to your posts and unlimber those guns or I'll have every dog of you court-martialed and shot before sunrise."

But not a man moved from his tracks. The old authority had perished even as it had sprung into being—by superior force and superior strategy.

"Sergeant Eberle!" ordered Captain Lantz, "You will take half a dozen men and escort these officers outside the reservation. Inform them that if they return they will be ironed and thrown into the guard-house."

In a twinkling the officers were surrounded and invited to trek it.

Responding somewhat too slowly to suit the sense of propriety of one of the newly-fledged soldiers of the commonwealth, the latter accelerated the retirement in the following expres-

sive, if not strictly military, language. "Skat!" he cried, "git out o' this!" and emphasized his advice by pricking with his bayonet the corpulent general and a too reluctant quartermaster.

And so, while the stars were paling before the onrushing god of day, amid a perfectly sulphurous profanity, reinforced by the fervent promise to hang the "whole damned mob of anarchists before night," the old order yielded to the new, so far as that garrison was concerned. It is a sample of what took place on every other government military reservation.

The militia companies of the several states performed miracles of valor in the cause of their capitalistic masters. But inasmuch as all their armories, consequently their weapons, were in the possession of the revolutionists they did it with their—that is to say, orally. Such indignation! Such direful things they promised to do to the "canaille." But then—they were very angry and anger is a state of mind that cannot, like the laureate's brook, go on forever.

Of the navy it may be said that two-thirds of the fighting ships, or those in local harbors, fell into the hands of the revolutionists through strategy and collusion between the Socialists of the crews and those on shore. The balance of the navy, being in foreign waters or at distant in-

sular possessions, could not immediately, even if so disposed, give any trouble to the new government.

The rest of the country was not expected to offer any serious armed resistance to the Socialistic programme and in that respect it was not disappointing. The local deputies, their friends and sympathizers, had the situation well in hand and violence was of rare occurrence.

The temporary headquarters of the new government had been established in City Hall, New York, and here it was President Tempest, surrounded by the seething millions of Greater New York, while other seething, boiling and distracted millions came continuously pouring in from adjacent states as fast as trains could whirl them, took up his duties and responsibilities as chief executive of what was nominally the Co-operative Commonwealth of America; but it would, perhaps, be more accurate to describe him as chief executive of a combination of Bedlam, Babel and Gehenna.

Three lines of military pickets formed a cordon around the building and admission was by card. It was not unlike the biblical description of the process of getting into the kingdom of heaven. Out of the millions who called and were anxious to call few were chosen. Personal and

private interests were remorselessly turned down in the rush of public business; and of the latter there seemed to be no end. Through those lines of pickets standing like a rock a steady stream of comrades filed in and out, bent upon the task of bringing order out of chaos. For the service of these a thousand automobiles had been impressed. Occasionally some high functionary under the old regime, a governor, legislator, political leader or newspaper man, was admitted; and these, if at all inclined to co-operate, were advised to go out and harangue the clamorous crowds and urge the necessity of relieving the down-town congestion by scattering to the parks, public halls and theatres, where hundreds of Socialist orators had been detailed to outline the immediate programme of the board.

One of the big newspaper plants in the vicinity had been pre-empted and Ollie Preston, assisted by half a dozen editorial aides, was running off hourly editions, posters, bulletins and hand bills, all dealing with some phase of the situation.

Most of the old police force had been persuaded to patrol their regular beats and these were reinforced by three thousand extras, the bulk of whom were assigned to the business districts; and so faithfuly did they perform their duty that not a single important instance of

breaking and looting occurred. Of course there were minor breaks and petty pilferings, but they were confined to out-of-the-way corners and obscure neighborhoods.

Central park was the grand overflow, stamping ground and mecca toward which the surging multitudes were encouraged to set their faces and, wearied, disappointed, finding that neither enlightenment, comfort nor any sort of satisfaction were to be obtained at headquarters, the restless crowds were nothing loath to make their way thither.

As regards the weather the fates had been kind indeed. A light south wind lazily rippled up the harbor. It faintly rustled the foliage of a million trees newly clad in their vernal robes and softly fluttered the new flags of the commonwealth—a crimson field with bars of blue and white and gold. The park was never lovelier. Myriads of freshly transplanted flowers were blooming in riotous profusion, the carpet of turf stretched away cool and inviting, and over all from out a cloudless, azure sky the genial rays of Old Sol filtered down with grateful warmth. Many platforms had been erected at convenient intervals and from these a thousand Socialist orators took turns in haranguing the hordes which, now that Socialism was no longer a

theory but was a condition, gave willing and attentive ear to doctrines they had erstwhile flouted as chimerical pipe-dreams hatched by the devil himself.

It was the pre-eminently glorious day of the once despised Socialist propagandist and he arose to the occasion as naturally and as gracefully as a duck takes to water. For years and years, through the changing seasons, through fair and foul, always in poverty and often in rags, in a hall when he could get one, but mostly in the open, in sleet and snow and rain and cold, on street corners from soap boxes and from curbing, hounded and hustled on by the inexorable vindictiveness of the law, pelted with brickbats and with ancient eggs, execrated, howled down and cursed, the butt of ridicule and the sport of fate—he had patiently told his heartfelt story to the wretched and exploited masses, pointing out the better way. And now his hour and his reward had come. With bursting heart and streaming eyes he proudly pointed to the flaunting banners that signaled the dawn of brotherhood and co-operation and painted in roseate colors the glories of the new social order which at last made possible of realization the elusive dream of French revolutionists a hundred years ago—the dream of liberty, equality and frater-

nity. His words crowded thick and fast upon his tongue and sank with hypnotic effect into the hearts of spellbound thousands. Standing beside the newly made grave of insensate greed he pronounced the requiescat over the system that engendered it and pictured an earthly paradise where selfishness, having lost its incentive for being, had perished for want of nourishment, and to make room for the principle of one for all and all for one.

There were a dozen mammoth refreshment booths from which substantial lunches were served to many thousand suburbanites, out-of town visitors and citizens; there were baseball games and other athletic sports; half a dozen brass bands furnished excellent music, and these and other forms of recreation and entertainment kept the crowds contented and enabled the strategy board to work with comparative freedom.

There were many ludicrous as well as numerous pathetic scenes to be witnessed about town. Here a wild-eyed capitalist, driven to desperation at the thought of losing his possessions, might be seen dashing along in his automobile in quest of some other frenzied financier with both the courage and the cash with which to purchase his equity in some parcel of real es-

tate, or maybe it would be railroad or other gilt-edge stock that he wished to turn into ready cash; but cash seemed to be scarce. It was the sort of riches that had taken wings and had flown to its nest in strong boxes.

Two citizens accredited as multi-millionaires met on Broadway. This is what they said:

"Good morning, Mr. A."

"Good morning, Mr. B."

"It is a lovely morning."

"Couldn't be beat."

"The anarchists seem to be having a little fun."

"Oh—well, we can't blame them much, as I know—all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

"Just so, just so; they'll be ready to go to work tomorrow."

"Beyond a doubt. They'll feel better after their little lark. Yes—by the way, you don't know of anybody that wants to buy a nice little block of N. Y. C.—do you?"

"Can't say that I do."

"Truth is, I'm behind a western road that's doing a lot of tunneling in the Rockies. It costs like the mischief and I find myself a little short of cash. The money market is so damned tight—you know how it is—and though I hate

to dispose of this profitable stock I'm going to do it, even if I have to sacrifice."

"You'd better hold on to it if you can. Now, if you were fixed like me there might be some sense in talking sacrifice. To be honest with you I'm in the devil's own boat and don't know how to turn myself. I've simply *got* to raise some cash. If you want to get out of the hole and get out quick—let me sell you 10,000 Adams Express. Monday night it was up around 300, and I'll let you have it at 200."

"Thanks—if I had the money to buy I shouldn't want to sell my——"

"I'll make it 150—come; you can't refuse that."

"Sorry, but there's no use in talking—now if you wanted to buy——"

"But I want to sell."

"Exactly. Well, I hope you will find a purchaser. Good morning."

"Good morning."

Strange—but everybody seemed to be on the bear side of the market; that is, everybody who was anybody, and it was a caution to frenzied feenawnce what a really extraordinary lot of sellers there were, to be sure, and how scarcer than the proverbial hens' teeth were the buyers. But pitzness was goot at der banks,

yes—to borrow a phrase from a well-known journalistic space-jammer—and the bulk of the business was around the paying tellers' windows. From the doors of all the banks whose officials had been considerate enough to leave in the vaults anything of value (about a third of those model fiduciary institutions had been looted by their officers before the hour of opening) extended a line of humanity whose fear-haunted and greed-obsessed countenances it were kinder not to describe in detail; and the lines obstructed the sidewalks for many blocks. For half an hour or so the order of precedence in the said lines of humanity had been determined by the law of the survival of the fittest—in a strictly pugilistic sense—and the immediately adjacent purlieus resembled nothing so much as a shambles. However, police were hurried to the different localities and thereafter place-jumping was kindly but firmly discouraged. The stoical-faced bank clerks peddled out the long green as long as any of that precious commodity remained; then they hung out cards announcing suspension and drifted out on the streets to see the sights.

At the corner of Twenty-third street and Fifth avenue a policeman was patrolling his beat. He was long past his prime and his ruddy, jovial

face, crowned by snow-white locks, wore a puzzled expression. A bunch of fifteen or twenty students strolled down the avenue, softly chanting a new revolutionary song that was all the rage at the vaudevilles. They halted the old policeman.

"What is this new-fangled thing they call Socialism?" enquired with great gravity one of their number.

"Faith, I dunno's I could be explainin' to ye, I dunno, jist phwat it consists of," answered the bluecoat, scratching his head for an idea, "but they do be sayin' that everything ye iver done before ye'll now be afther doin' directly the conthra-ary."

"Thank you!" they chorused, and looked around for an opportunity to put the new rule into practice. An empty low-gear drawn by two powerful dapple greys was passing.

"By jove, don't you know, fellows, that isn't right," solemnly announced one of the youths. "Those poor horses have been dragging around that heavy cart and its lazy driver all too long, methinks. It is time they had a ride at the expense of the Jehu, who is no Socialist as anyone can see." And while the policeman looked on in helpless amazement and the driver outdid himself in profanity, they unhitched the horses, led

them onto the truck and started off down the avenue, compelling the driver to do his share of hauling, the crowds meanwhile yelling encouragement.

Business was also good with the various ocean liners in port. Two or three steamers were scheduled to sail the first of May, and several more were in the harbor, one having docked early that morning. These latter in the ordinary course of events would have lain over several days for passenger bookings and their regular complement of cargo. Under the circumstances, however, their captains all arranged to put to sea the moment they had coaled and taken on provisions for the return voyage. The proposition looked simpler than it really was, since most of the longshoremen were out in Central park drinking in with thirsty souls and greedy ears the glad tidings that earthly paradise was at hand; and were engaged in bidding a long farewell to suffering, sorrow, poverty and human wretchedness in general. But the hiatus between misery and paradise was as yet of too brief duration for money to have completely lost its magical charm over the minds of all men; and the promise of what seemed to them fabulous sums induced a sufficient number of needy ones to turn stevedore.

The rumor had somehow leaked out of the keeping of the censors that there was to be an exodus of captains of industry and finance and the crush of under-dogs at the various piers was terrific. One boat cast off her hawsers at 10:45 A. M. She should have hauled in her plank two hours earlier. The delay was due to the crowd that obstructed the pier, the streets adjacent, the baggage wagons and even the sacred persons of the emigrants themselves. There was a painful dearth of police, one lone representative of the force being on hand to sweep back the hordes of accumulated and still accumulating slum dwellers who flocked like buzzards to the feast. His efforts much resembled those of a historical lady whose broom proved inadequate to the requirements.

A line of autos, buses and coupes extended back from the pier as far as the eye could reach. Wagons, drays and vans, loaded to heaven with grips, trunks and hand baggage of every description, collected until the congestion was simply indescribable. The crowd was there first, it was there to stay and it had no intention of losing a drop of the exquisite fun of prolonging the agony of the plutes. For the first time in his whole wretched existence M. Le Proletaire was *it* and he enjoyed the novel sensation.

Curses, threats, bribes and tears were alike unavailing. Every passenger and every baggage wagon that got through had to run the gantlet.

"Say, Mr. Plute, wot's the matter wit' this country?"

"What bank did you loot this morning?"

"Aw, g'wan! you gotter guess agin—he's a insurance company president."

"How much widders' and orphans' boodle yer got in that grip-sack?"

"Git out! He wouldn't steal. You c'n see that be the looks of 'im."

"Ain't he a lulu?"

"Ya-as—he's sure a peach."

"Cheer up, old sport! The woist is yet to come."

And so on ad infinitum, the final request invariably being, "Say, 'Please let us through.'" And the answer would as invariably be: "Please let us through."

Once the fierce Dutch captain of the liner, his whiskers bristling like cactus spikes, a brace of revolvers to the front, descended upon the mob with a roar that could be heard a mile, and, spitting a torrent of outlandish oaths from his hairy throat, threw his powerful shoulders into the breach made by his artillery. His triumph was short lived. The crowd closed in. They

took his guns away from him and broke them over the wheels of a truck. They picked him up as if he had been a rag baby and dumped him into the river. Then, it being evident that he could not swim, they threw him a rope and hoisted him back to the pier. All the fight was out of him.

"Don't monkey some more der band wagon mit, Dutchy!" he was advised.

When the liner at last swung out into the channel her first and second cabins and even the steerage, were packed almost to suffocation with New York's codfish aristocracy of wealth, their families, men servants, maid servants, poll parrots, poodle dogs and what treasure trove they could by hook or crook lay their hands upon, regardless of the law of meum et tuum. Their day of judgment had come—only they did not tarry to be judged. To henceforth earn their living in the sweat of their faces was a contingency too terrifying even to be considered; and they had passed the privilege up.

The other boats had similar difficulties in getting away. It was estimated that more than twenty-five thousand families left the country during the day and so great was the demand for passage that steerage berths brought $5,000 apiece. Even at that not more than a third of

those who were ready and anxious to get away and willing to pay the price could be accommodated.

Down in the hold of one of the outward bound steamships two patriots collided in the precarious footing caused by mountains of baggage piled helter-skelter and lying in inextricable confusion where it had been dumped by the simple, yet expeditious, method of throwing it down the hatchways.

"Hello there, Mr. B." saluted one.

"Hello! By George, that you, Mr. A? Have you sold that block of N. Y. C. yet?"

The former magnate grinned sheepishly in the uncertain light that had not been installed for the accommodation of millionaires. "Say, ain't this hell?" he queried.

The other did not reply. Perhaps he did not hear. He was staring moodily at nothing in particular and listening to the churning of the waves against the ship's staunch bottom.

CHAPTER V.

With such and similar scenes the first day under the law of expropriation wore away. President Tempest had instructed his deputies to spare no effort to keep open all existing lines of transportation and communication. In this he was aided by the circumstance that most of the trainmen and railroad employees in general were trades unionists and Socialists; and still more by the fact that the chief officials of the different roads were like minded—not because they relished the idea of deadheading the curious and idle millions over the country, but because they were as much in the dark as the general public and figured that if any relief were to come for a situation which they unanimously characterized as "anarchistic," it must come by way of the railroads. They kept the wires hot with telegrams to Washington. But although their appeals to the overthrown government were frantic they received no satisfaction and relief was as distant and as conjectural as before.

The telegraphers held the key to the situation. They were Socialists almost to a man,

their communication with headquarters was uninterrupted and they alone, as a class, could grasp and analyze the significance of the movement as a whole and keep in touch with the pulse of the nation at its mighty heart and throughout its myriad arteries. And they were not giving anything away. By a prearranged plan nothing but Socialist business received the least attention. The captains of industry were mystified and helpless, as was the general public, but they did not dare cut the wires. They had a horror of any further isolation and waited and hoped for the news they could not get, the relief that was not in sight, the messages that never came. The one thing that deposed authority everywhere prayed for, wept for, raved and stormed for and bitterly cursed because it could not obtain, yet looked for with every incoming train—was a jaunty and disciplined troup of their Uncle Sam's regulars who should alight from a string of day coaches and, unslinging their carbines and working with automatic precision, commerce a merry biff! bang! biff! like bridegrooms advancing to the feast, and keep it up until the heart was shot out of every "upstart revolutionist" in sight. They could not all at once realize that the old authority and the old law were dead and cast upon

the junk-heap of history. It was too sudden. It was too preposterous. Jamais! impossible! absurd!

Another thing: As a man readeth so will he think. They had read naught but capitalistic journals whose subsidized editors had never in their lives passed up an opportunity to tell their devoted readers the direful things that would happen if the Socialists should ever come into power. According to these inspired prophets such a contingency (they took pains, though, to inform their friends that it really never could occur) would be followed by a reign of terror which would make the doings of the French revolution and the pleasantries of the Act of Faith look like a silver quarter plus a nickel by comparison. There was to be nothing but blood, blood, blood. If there was or could be anything additional it would be more blood. But the timid and horror-stricken reactionaries looked around in vain for any signs of the crimson life-fluid. The great American voting king with the French pseudonym—to wit, the proletaire—he wasn't shedding any blood nor was he contemplating anything approximately or more remotely bearing upon the subject of gore. He was taking advantage of a free outing and was having the happiest time of his life. Socialist orators were

telling him that monopoly had been thrown off his back and he straightened out his bent spine and felt and looked a foot taller because of the blessed relief. The Socialists themselves were not shedding any blood, although heaven knows they did not lack for provocation. Neither were the gentle and pious reactionaries wading knee-deep in the sanguinary tide they knew was due, by all the prophets and by all the rules of prophecy. Indeed blood was mainly conspicuous by its entire absence. Those who had the power to inaugurate the expected reign of terror desired nothing but peace and harmony, while those who would have unchained the blood-hounds were powerless.

Expropriation, too, of which such disastrous things had been prophesied, was, in actual practice, scarcely noticed by the average citizen, so smooth and orderly were its workings. All extensive stockyards, grain elevators, wholesale grocery concerns and jobbers' stocks of necessary and staple commodities were taken over as a matter of course; and all transportation lines were run in the interests of the public. But this interfered with comparatively few people and those few were undisturbed in their other possessions. In fact, as a Chicago member of the strategy board wired President Tempest, the whole country

was picnicking, everything was lovely and all things working together for the good of those who served the Lord on the side of the co-operative commonwealth.

Many thousands of merchants in the aggregate, mostly those living in seaport towns, and more specifically the owners of stocks of jewelry and precious stones and metals, rich tapestries, rugs and art goods, having chartered such sea-going craft as were to be had, were moving heaven and earth to transfer their possessions aboard and sail for some foreign port where they could be disposed of, even if at a sacrifice. From their point of view a half-loaf was better than no bread. With these forehanded individuals nobody interfered until certain of their number began to set fire to what they could not thus carry off, and, moreover, circulated reports that the Socialists were looting and burning the town. This was the straw that broke the camel's back. The order went forth that no more merchandise was to be moved and that all owners of such stocks would be held responsible for further conflagrations of the sort.

In the country districts the rural population pursued the even tenor of its accustomed way. Now and then an excited farmer would come home from the market town bringing his local

paper which announced that the country was in the grip of sedition, rebellion, anarchy, treason, incendiarism, mob rule and other terrible things, and called upon the tillers of the soil to rise in their "majestic might and virtuous indignation" and "stamp out the Briarean monster of foreign importation" until it was "deader than a door nail," together with a great deal more hysterical bombast along the same general line. The majority of the grangers, however, had not in the recent past found life so dear nor peace so sweet under the beneficent domination of the trusts that they could be enthused into any more warlike ebullition than a phlegmatic "Let 'er come, b'gosh!"

* * * * *

In the meantime the chief executive of the defunct republic had had, and was still having, troubles of his own. They did not come singly and alone; they came in bunches, legions, myriads, and every passing hour contributed to his further agony of soul. To begin with, some time in the small hours before daybreak his bedroom telephone, singing viciously, aroused him from a profound slumber.

"What do *you* want?" he growled resentfully.

"You are informed that the Socialists have

captured the District," announced a voice he recognized as belonging to his secretary.

"The hell they have! What do you take this to be—the first of April?"

"Alas! your excellency, I fear this is no joke. The reds have seized the military defences and are swarming——"

The booming of many cannon, some nearby, others far out across the Potomac, drowned the rest of his secretary's message. From the adjacent square arose a tumultuous cheering, the tramp, tramp of bands of marching soldiers, the lively strains of a fife and drum corps.

"Gott im Himmel!" swore the president hustling into his outer garments, I was wrong about that April fool business—they must think this is the fourth of July."

In his great haste and excitement the executive had seized upon the first articles of apparel that came to hand—a pair of khaki riding breeches, a white pique waistcoat, a hunting coat with red flannel lining which, having been left wrong side out by his colored valet, he did not stop to turn. One foot he thrust into a tan-colored riding boot, the other into a black leather military boot. The only headgear in sight was a silk plug and this he jammed upon his head with an impatient oath and strode into

his private office roaring for his black horse to be saddled in tones to wake the neighborhood, if any still slept through the previous racket.

In the outer office or reception room was as forlorn an aggregation of dignitaries as ever beheld the batons of authority fade away. Two of the District commissioners were there, looking as foolish as they doubtless felt. The chief of police with half a dozen of his crestfallen stalwarts; a department commander of infantry who had in his day played hide-and-seek with Sitting Bull and other notorious and rebellious wards of the nation; a wildly gesticulating group of army officers whose simultaneous and painful efforts to explain just how it all happened were nothing if not distracting; two or three cabinet members; half a score senators and congressmen; made up a Down-and-Out club whose membership was being constantly augmented by fresh recruits. Into this bunch of pink-tea statesmen and had-been warriors, the president hurled his imposing make-up with the force of a catapult. He had completed his fetching ensemble by the addition of a brace of army revolvers and a cavalryman's sabre, snatched from the wall as he ran, and adjusted with scant regard for the requirements of military etiquette.

"Gentlemen!" he thundered reproachfully, "is this the way you crush out anarchy and rebellion? Upon my word there's no anarchy here. You'll find it out on the streets where the brazen-throated rabble is howling the stars loose in their sockets and, I doubt not, murdering innocent citizens by the thousands."

"Sir," cried the old department commander, trembling with righteous indignation, "we are helpless!"

"You certainly look the part," commented the executive with scathing irony, "but what help do you expect to find here—why are you not leading your troops against these greasy cut-throats and rebels before God and man?"

"The troops are rebels also—those who are not rebels are prisoners——"

"But the naval reserves—the militia——"

"Nothing doing—they're either Socialists, anarchists or else under a guard of those same delectable wretches."

"God's blood! But the man-o-warsmen—they haven't——"

'Every man-jack is a mutineer or else in irons because he isn't a mutineer."

"That's consoling—there's nothing like the whole-hog-or-none spirit."

At this juncture the honorable secretary of

war, puffing and blowing like a porpoise in distress, came waddling into the council chamber. His clothes were awry, his hat missing, his face covered with blood, the result of a fall on the pavement.

"Mr.—President!" he shrieked in a labored falsetto, for his wind had completely died out, "anarchy—reigns!"

"I should say that it pours," corrected the chief, grimly, and the honorable secretary collapsed into a convenient chair, mopping his bleeding face with a handkerchief.

The president glanced wrathfully over his bunch of down-and-outers. His gaze fell upon the two mournful commissioners.

"What are *you* expecting to accomplish around here?" he demanded, with a frankness that was embarrassing and an accent that was irritating, to say the least. "Do you think the District of Columbia is the whole United States? Why are you not telegraphing for outside assistance? Are you going to wait until we are all butchered? Are you——"

"We called up Baltimore," broke in one of the commissioners, wearily, "and the operator politely replied that Baltimore had troubles of her own. We got Philadelphia. Anarchy likewise reigns there—or pours, if your excellency pre-

fers that expression," he added with malice up his sleeve. "We also connected with the governor of New York. His cheerful response was to the effect that both city and state depend upon Washington for relief."

"Oh!—they do, do they? Their modesty is as ingenuous as their faith in Washington is sublime and touching. So they depend upon us—well, I hope they'll not be disappointed. Seems to me—oh, Mr. Secretary!"

The secretary of state, much perturbed in mind and general appearance, had just arrived and was evidently looking for his chief. The latter led the way to an inner room. "What's the outlook?" he asked.

"Good God! The whole country's gone to smash," wailed the secretary. "It's simply unbelievable. How they did it I can't imagine, and if I could it wouldn't be of any use; but the Socialists have captured everything in sight from Maine to California—the army, the navy, forts, arsenals, ordnance, ammunition, supplies—in fact, although it's perfectly shocking to realize, we're outwitted, outclassed, and bound hand and foot."

"Humph!" snorted the president, "where did you find out so much?"

"From one of the brutes themselves. You re-

member Hugo Lane?—used to be a tow-headed page in the Senate until he got fired for something or other. Well, he took up telegraphy and for the past year or longer has held down the night shift at the hotel. I knew he was a red-hot Socialist and when the ruction started this morning I started for him the first thing. He put me off for an hour or so, but as soon as he learned that the mob was victorious everywhere he became more communicative."

"Humph!" again growled the executive. He was doing some tall thinking. "Did he happen to mention who was at the head of the new dispensation?"

"Why, yes—but I forget—oh, it is the fellow who wrote the novel, 'Wind and Whirlwind'—his name is Tempest or some such foul-weather cognomen. The new Capitol building, I understand, is City Hall, New York."

"Well, I don't know that it is of any consequence for the next week or ten days who he is or where he is. After that he would better move his seat of government further inland than New York City Hall. Now, Mr. Secretary, can we get a cablegram across to the other side?"

"Probably; by way of my summer place in the Adirondacks and Montreal—I think I can."

"Then," said the president, "for God's sake get a wiggle on yourself! Send the message to Kaiser Bill. He'll know what to do. He'll start out a crowd that will lap up Socialism the way Hades is supposed to assimilate snowballs."

With a much lighter heart than he had come the Secretary hastened away; and three hours later the German Emperor was reading the following cablegram signed by the president and countersigned by his secretary of state:

> Hell has broken loose in the United States just as in Russia. Send relief at once or we perish. Advise other powers.

Like an electric shock that cry of despair from over sea went through the kind heart of the emperor, so many of whose worthy compatriots of beneficent trust-fame he saw in his mind's eye exposed to the horror of having to go to work. He immediately dashed off a reply, but it had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the enemy. The operator did not exactly suppress the message, but he and some of his waggish comrades took such liberty with the text that when it finally reached the hands of the secretary of state it read something like this:

Der dog-haus of der Hohenzollerns,
May der Fairst.

MINE GOOT UND LIEBER FREUNDTS:

Me und Gott iss cameing to der rescue. Vait for I. Don'd do a ting till I got dere. Your poor lonesome spiel for hellup iss to make a stone image veep. Gottsdonnerblitzen! but I vill rouss mit dose arnykists. All your droubles vill be ofer—not yet, but soon.

WILHELM.

It was 3:30 o'clock in the afternoon. President Tempest was at his desk at City Hall and nearby was a group of half a dozen strategists. The crowds had long since departed, but a reduced number of pickets still paroled the building, to the unbounded disgust of such cranks and curiosity seekers as hankered for a tete-a-tete with authority, as well as of a numerous class of citizens who had on tap a string of grievances that would reach from the Battery to Harlem, all growing out of the new law and varying all the way from the loss of a pet poodle to the loss of a railway system. All these kickers were good looking but they couldn't get in.

"Oh, I don't know," remarked Benton Ordway, "we seem to be doing fairly well for the first day's try-out of expropriation."

"So we are," said Paul Devoe, "but we mustn't take it for granted that opposition is dead because it is temporarily stupefied."

"There's one sort of opposition that's neither dead nor sleeping," declared President Bill, and he added: "but, by the Triangular Trinity! it will be, inside of another twenty-four hours, or I'll know the reason why."

"What's that, Bill?" inquired Vic Mercereau, languidly gazing down at the street panorama.

"I was referring to some of these damned rabid newspapers on the Row. They will have to radically change their tune or I'll shut off their wind. Listen to this gem from the editorial page. It is only a sample of the stuff with which the rest of the page, and in fact the whole paper, is filled:

> The lawless hellions of anarchy and expropriation are strutting out their little hour upon the stage of contemporary history. Today they are feasting and drinking, glutting their proletarian appetites upon the luxuries for which they toiled not, steeping their barbarian senses ad nauseam in the riches that others accumulated. Today the Have-nots are running amuck through the house of Have and playing football with the ten billion dollars representing the taxable wealth of the metropolis. True to their gutter breeding and swinish instincts they wallow upon and defile what they cannot immediately devour or carry off; and their saturnalia of

crime and disregard of property rights is characteristically rounded out by a corresponding contempt for the inviolability of the person—many thousands among the refined and exclusive families of the community having suffered the most shameful and humiliating indignities at the hands of this sacrilegious rabble that perpetrates its unspeakable infamies in the name of liberty, in the name of civilization, in the name of evolution! Ay; they are feasting today and when the drop curtain of night descends upon the disgraceful scene God only knows what bacchanalian orgies, what riot of bloodshed and butchery, will be launched upon a shuddering and helpless public.

But—courage! If we have been unfaithful sentries on the watch-towers of popular sovereignty—as perhaps some of us may have been—this is our reward and our bitter lesson. Not soon again shall we fall asleep at our posts. This cup of our degradation will pass away. In one week from today, or less, if an over-ruling Providence so will it, the blind and fatuous horde, surfeited of its own excesses, will fall an easy prey to the determined and self-reliant citizenship that has made our glorious country what it is. In one week from today the ignoble carcasses of anarchy and the leaders of anarchy will litter the earth as she is strewn with autumn leaves, a warning

to those who in the future would attempt to subvert the state and tamper with authority. In one week——"

An usher approached bearing a card and the president paused in his reading. He glanced at the pasteboard and his features lighted up with amazement and incredulity.

"Oh—by all means—certainly—show the gentleman right up," he said.

The gentleman in question proved to be a tall, athletically set up specimen of perhaps forty-five years, dressed in the height of fashion and wearing a fresh carnation in his buttonhole.

"I beg your pardon," he said, advancing to the president's desk, "but I am deputized by a committee of prominent citizens to wait upon your—is one expected to say 'serene excellency?' —with the object of—er—interviewing you in regard to such of your plans for the immediate future as you may be disposed to give out to the public."

"Why do you not better conceal the contempt which you, as a capitalistic belly-crawler and time-server, naturally feel toward a Socialist, who is independent and, therefore, out of your class—aren't you actor enough or don't you care to—and what is it you want to know, anyhow?"

"I—that is—er—we—really, this is most extraordinary—oh, anything that your—that you may be willing to communicate——"

Under the transfixion of the president's glittering eye, colder than forty below zero, the caller paused, stammering in confusion. He attempted to bluster it out, gave it up and crawfished toward the door, mumbling some unintelligible apology.

"One moment," commanded President Bill. "Turn about is only fair play. Now, if you don't mind, I will interview you. Step this way, please."

The other hesitated. Nobody appreciated better than he the sorry figure he had cut as an interviewer. He glanced nervously at his only avenue of escape. Vic Mercereau and another comrade were strolling carelessly over his way and he had no doubt as to their motive. Unwillingly he retraced his steps.

"What can I do for you?" he inquired, with what indifference of manner and tone he could command.

The president seized a blue pencil and drew a circle around the editorial from which he had just been reading. "You are the editor of this publication, I believe," he said. "Did you write this article?"

The journalist began to understand the reason for his chilly reception. "Suppose I did?" he queried.

"The authorship is already sufficiently suppositious. I ask you a plain, straightforward question. Did you, or did you not, write the editorial?"

"Well, if you must know, I wrote the article, certainly. You Socialists have split your lungs clamoring for freedom of the press. Do you now wish to abrogate it because the boot happens to be on the other foot?"

"Not the freedom of the press, but this editorial is the topic under discussion. It is only confusing to generalize where specification is plainly called for. Now—this carnival of murder, running amuck, rioting, incendiarism, bacchanalian orgies, looting and ravishing of the person that you so glibly picture—do you happen to know of any particular instance calculated to give even a shred of truth to your violent tirade? Have you knowledge of any murders committed by Socialists?"

"Why—no—there are reports——"

"Who reported—who has, to your knowledge, seen anything of the kind?"

"I cannot say—the city is full of rumors."

"Then you do not actually know of anybody being murdered?"

"Not exactly—no."

"Not exactly? What do you mean by that? Do you know of anybody who has been half-way murdered by Socialists?"

"No."

"Oh—you don't, eh? Well, according to the best of my information and belief your chances of getting assigned to the same brimstone pile with old Ananias appear exceedingly bright. Can you substantiate, by furnishing me with names, dates and places, any one of the serious charges herein preferred against the comrades-militant of the co-operative commonwealth?"

His niblets was obliged to confess to a painful dearth of the goods called for.

"Then," declared President Bill, "my time being too valuable to squander upon incorrigibles of your type, this is my pronunciamento: Your journalistic rag, having forfeited its right to be, is herewith incontinently squelched; and you and your precious outfit of mental and moral perverts are cordially invited to trek it—to treat yourselves to a peripatetic sneak around the block. I think that is all; and you may consider the interview closed, so far as I am concerned."

As he made his escape the discomfited journalist could not resist the impulse to deliver a parting shot. "I hope you Socialists will enjoy

your new rattle," he sneeringly cried, "but it is my consolation that you will not have long to shake it. The powers of christendom will not stand for this sort of thing; and after your unholy rabble has paid the inevitable penalty of sedition—when you are all rotting in hell—please consider that the New York ——— will still be doing business at the old stand."

"If they send you around here for any more interviews there will most likely be a vacant chair in the editorial rooms whether or not that subsidized sheet resumes its hot-air functions," retorted the chief; but his bird had flown out of hearing.

"They die hard," observed Ordway.

"Yes," replied the president, "they have been 'molding' public opinion so long that the bare idea of introducing a new set of molds brings on heart disease."

* * * * *

The sun went down in a blaze of crimson glory. One by one the stars came out, looming softly through the mist that overhung the harbor. From their illimitable spaces they flashed and wheeled along their inscrutable way as calmly, as majestically as they had when Babylon was razed by fire and sword, when Alexandria, capitulating to the invaders' torches, lit up the sea

for miles around, or when imperial Rome was sacked by yellow-haired barbarians from the Northland.

The four-and-a-half million population of Greater New York furnished a practical illustration of the contention that philosophy is not yet dead. With scarcely a surface ripple of excitement Broadway and Fifth avenue pursued their accustomed pleasures and distractions, and theatres, cafés, shops and amusement halls were running full blast, just as if the most momentous revolution of history were an every-day, matter-of-fact occurrence.

But withal it was strikingly noticeable that the crowds seemed to have lost the weary, brooding, care-obsessed expression that aforetime, like the deep and resistless undercurrent of some mightly stream, always lay beneath their lightest laughter and jarred discordantly in their gayest tones. The bitter struggle for bread under the polished warfare of competition was the Banquo that lurked behind every smile; that, unbidden, came and stared gloomily across every feast. And now that the ghost had been exorcised the restless throngs moved with a lighter step, the laughter was care-free and spontaneous. It was heaven itself for the multitudes to realize that profit, rent and interest had extracted their

last drop of blood, their last pound of flesh. Just to dream that no man owned their means of livelihood, that the lying, scrambling, underbidding and gouging for a chance to work were things of the past, that poverty was forever banished—was like a breath from Elysian fields, a draught of nectar from the chalices of the gods.

Of course there were glowering, sullen faces, too, among the populace that idly drifted over town exchanging gossip or repeating startling rumors; but these, as a rule, were not to be seen upon the street. Behind closed doors and barred windows, muttering and scowling in the gloom, armed for they knew not what, dreading attacks from they knew not whence, cursing the law, the mob, the country and themselves, trembling and moaning, pacing to and fro like caged animals, glaring down upon the streets with white, hate-distorted features: were not a few of the possessing class who had at the expense of others lived in luxury and idleness all their days and who now saw that the jig was up. What to them was the lackadaisical philosophy that one class of society cannot, except by endangering the whole of society, prey upon another class? In nameless terror, as if awaiting for the crack of doom, they wandered about in the midst of their overthrown and discredited money gods,

trying to imagine what life would be without them, endeavoring to picture what new horrors the next step in expropriation would reveal. For them chaos had come, indeed, and their cup of wretchedness was full and running over.

And while the disinherited millions rejoiced, feasting, laughing and shouting because they had come into possession of their own after the lapse of uncounted centuries of exploitation; and while the victims of expropriation hugged their broken idols and flitted like ghosts amid the ruins of the temple of Mammon, a strange thing came to pass—that is, it was strange to the thoughtless and credulous multitudes. The strategy board could have explained the phenomenon, for they had been at some pains to produce it.

High up above the city, far out over the Hudson, toward the mystery-shrouded North and almost as far away, it seemed, as Polaris itself, like an omen from the gods in bygone days, in letters of fire that blazed faintly, yet distinctly, across the sky, the awe-stricken millions read and softly repeated, one to another, this promise and token of a brighter day:

LET ALL THE NATIONS REJOICE AND BE GLAD!
PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN!

CHAPTER VI.

The co-operative commonwealth had been inaugurated a week. Slowly but surely order, system, definite plan, were displacing the chaos born of revolution. The strategy board had to creep before it could walk; but it candidly acknowledged its limitations, sought advice when in doubt, invoked the aid of the referendum principle and announced from day to day the outlines of its general policy, so that all interested might share in the discussion of the programme which was intended to affect all in equal degree.

Ay; all in equal degree. How glibly such platitudes used to fall from the lips of politicians! From the Fourth of July orator we learned that all men were born free and equal, although in the white-and-gold cradles of Special Privilege were infant heirs to fortunes so vast that thousands, even tens of thousands, of workers must toil their wretched lives away in the uphill task of producing dividends upon the enormous capital invested for those tiny plutocrats.

"But hold!" exclaim the supporters of capitalistic institutions, "not so fast. Why, don't

you know that any one of those toilers could, if he had the brains, not only elevate himself to independence but might even acquire possession of the very millions bequeathed to his infant employer, and at death leave in another white-and-gold cradle an infant of his own whose fortune should be double that of the said infant employer?"

The argument is irrelevant in that it has no bearing upon the proposition that all are born free and equal; furthermore, it makes no account of the modern system of trust-management by which swollen fortunes are practically entailed for all time; and the speciousness of the logic is still further apparent when one reflects that even if now and then a toiler could so rise to affluence the rest of the toilers would be as wretchedly off as before. They would have merely changed masters and their ill-starred progeny would still be born under inferior and unequal conditions.

Another fanciful stock argument, as beautiful as it was visionary, predicated that all were equal before the law, that Justice was blind, impartial, unswerving—in a word that she was just.

She may have been blind. There used also to be a suspicion that she was lame, and in other respects both physically and mentally deformed;

but just she certainly was not and never could have been under the rule of Special Privilege which at will set up and pulled down its own preferred brand of the oracular goddess, as instanced by the rich criminals who sinned and got away, and by common criminals who sinned and who also got a way—a different way. Even when, for the moral effect it was supposed to have upon the masses, a predatory trust was brought to book and punished the punishment, being in the nature of a fine, invariably reacted upon the public which, through the enhanced prices immediately levied upon the products of that particular monopoly, promptly paid back the fine with interest. Thus was equality between classes, whether politically, socially, economically, legally or even from a religious standpoint, a byword and a jest.

In contradistinction to this somewhat painful joke, equality under co-operation was what the label indicated, principally and especially because of the extinction of classes. Class rule having come to grief of its own artificiality had forfeited its right to further prolongation of the competitive agony and had died a natural death; since revolution, either peaceful or violent, was the legitimate and only possible end.

Accordingly, in line with the new conception

of equality—the equality that really equalized—the sine qua non of citizenship was the badge of the worker. Idlers, drones, parasites and dilettanti might suicide or starve; but no adequate provision was made for them to live. Everybody from the president down the line was a worker and was obliged to furnish the quid pro quo. Public office was a public trust and not a public "snap," and every public officer had a good stout string attached to him by means of which a reasonable percentage of the voters could recall him without circumlocution, red tape, chancery courts or impeachment proceedings.

This new conception of equality does not necessarily mean that a board of competent anthropologists, sociologists, chemists and phrenologists had met in conclave and solemnly and learnedly announced that every citizen of the commonwealth was endowed with the same mental and physical characteristics and capacities. Far from it. It signifies, rather, that classes having been abolished by the expropriation of the national resources, thus putting all upon the same economic level, social, political and legal inequalities could not exist.

As agriculture is the basis of civilized existence upon the planet, has always been and must continue to be, steps were thus early taken to

provide for the planting of immense areas to spring crops of staple cereals and vegetables. For this purpose millions of acres in the central West were set aside and the work of clearing them of farm buildings, fences and other obstructions was begun. Many villages and larger towns thus had to go, as they were of no practical use and far from ornamental. All of which was preparatory to the introduction of steam plows and other power-driven machinery and gave temporary employment to several million farmers and other workers from the cities, clerks, salesmen, etc., who were nothing loath to have a change of occupation, get a view of the vast plains, the mighty waterways, the majestic mountains, the many inspiring works of nature, of which the continent is so prodigal, but which, under the debasing era of dollar-grubbing, they could never have hoped to see, outside of dreams and post-cards. The fiction that human beings preferred to pass their lives in dingy, stuffy offices and salesrooms with their inevitable accompaniment of vitiated atmosphere, unsanitary appointments, contaminated water supply and germ-laden, disease-breeding surroundings generally, when they might just as well, had they so chosen, have got out and labored in the glorious air and sunshine which are the heritage

of the race—was worthy of the unnatural and artificial system that invented and handed it down. The causes lay deeper beneath the surface (just as did those of the domestic "servant" problem) than any more freedom of choice would indicate; but those days being forever over and gone it were bootless now to attempt an analysis. Suffice it to say that plantation life with its social groups, its modern inventions and conveniences, its public restaurants presided over by qualified chefs, its varied amusements, rapid communication, freedom of transportation to neighboring groups and to large centers of population, together with a delightful programme of alternating work and recreation, the most of the work, even, being done by machinery; promised to attract to agricultural communities all whose occupations in the equally necessary mechanical arts and crafts did not debar them from the choice.

Rome was not built in a day, but they made a beginning the first day. And just so did the chief agriculturists, architects and landscape gardeners of each of the prospective groups, or plantations, plan for the future beauty of the completed whole.

In the South, also, immense tracts were set aside for the same purpose, care being exercised not to intrude other crops upon the natural

habitat of the cotton plant which was destined to fulfill so important a function in the domestic economy of the future, even as it had in the past.

Other millions of the populace found employment building highways and trolley roads in the sections designed for agricultural purposes, in accordance with the recognized necessity for rapid and easy communication between the various groups.

Still other large numbers of workers were engaged in transporting supplies to the new centers of population; so that, even at the end of the first week, what with machinery, steel and metal workers, carpenters and allied craftsmen whose services or whose output were in demand at the same points, it was evident that more than half the population of the entire country was massed or rapidly massing around the vast tracts to be devoted to agriculture.

Peach and apple, cherry, pear, prune, orange and lemon orchards, all in the particular localities pronounced by government experts as best adapted for their successful cultivation, remained to be set out and propagated on the same extensive scale. Vineyards, berries and all small fruits would in time receive like attention, furnishing healthful and pleasurable occupation for many thousand women and children.

And then—but this is anticipating, owing to the fact that the strategy board could in a day, and without working overtime at that, think up more delectable schemes for the aggrandizement of the commonwealth than the workers could carry out in a year of Sundays.

And while grim-visaged war seemed to have had a tailor's goose rubbed across its wrinkled front, so far as concerned the internal and domestic programme of co-operation, the comrades temporarily guiding the ship of state were forcibly reminded that co-operative man does not live for himself alone while competitive standards prevail in outside bailiwicks. The reminder came in the shape of a cablegram in the cypher of the international Socialist code:

> Hostile fleet twenty-five warships assembling in North Sea. Will convoy a hundred transports — 200,000 infantry. Probably sail 10th of month.

"That's encouraging," remarked President Bill to Swale Oldrem, who had just come into the executive chamber.

"That means there'll be at least 300,000 of 'em in all," said Swale, pulling meditatively at his cigar. "It also means," he added, "that the fish are due for the banquet of their lives."

"I don't suppose there's any doubt about the

reliability of those new-fangled submarine destroyers—eh?" queried the president a trifle anxiously. He had already had a strenuous day with the kickers and knockers and the "woist" was yet to come.

"Well, you can gamble on it, there's no doubt whatever," asserted Oldrem. "Stevens and I have just been down to Sandy Hook trying one of 'em out. Say—they're the goods all right. Gad, there's nothing to 'em but engine and torpedo tube—only two people can crawl aboard, one to run the engine and the other to steer and work the artillery—but take it from me they can go like a scared jack-rabbit and stay under water a week. We took a hundred-mile spin down among the mermaids in a little over three hours. That's going some, isn't it? But Stevens said he didn't let her out; was afraid we'd strike a wreck or a reef or something of the sort. No; you needn't worry about the submarines—they'll do their part."

"In that case," declared the president, "we'll do ours and soon business will be no end brisk."

"For the finny tribe," murmured Swale, and a world of conviction was in his tone.

"Oh, God!" groaned the president, "here comes another kicker."

"It's a mortal pipe he's one," agreed Swale. "If you say so I'll toss him out of the window."

"No," said the president wearily, "we're here to receive kicks. Let him unfold his tale of woe. He will feel better if nobody else does."

A tall, elderly, wild-eyed and long-haired individual was bearing down upon them with rapid strides. As he approached he fixed his glassy gaze upon the executive and wailed in the treble clef:

"Damn my luck! Damn my luck!" and repeated the invocation.

"Well, returned the president dispassionately, "I don't know as I have any objection to your damning your luck, only—couldn't you do it outside as effectively as here? You certainly do not attempt to establish a valid connection between your deplorable luck and any possible ulterior motive, sinister design or malice prepense upon my part—do you?"

"That's where you're off. Of course I do—that's what I come for," declared the unlucky one. "Don't a God-given genius get no rights under your damned Socialistic government? Listen! For thirty years I've been working on the invention of a steam plow that would turn over two hundred and fifty acres in a day—yes, sir—two hundred and fifty acres—and now, by jiminy cricket! jest as I git her perfected, ready to set back and rake in the profits—everybody says

'twould a brought me a cool million—along comes your crazy crowd and turns things topsy-turvy and I don't git a red cent!"

"Why, my dear sir," beamed the president, "you are to be congratulated. That is just the layout the strategy board is looking for."

"But where do I come in?" demanded the disgusted inventor.

"Why, you get the credit of inventing the plow, of course."

"Credit! I don't want no credit—I want the coin," protested the visitor.

"How much coin would you like?" inquired the president.

"I ought to have a million."

"All right, I guess we can accommodate you."

"But," interrupted the other suspiciously, "it won't buy nothin', will it?"

"Not in this commonwealth."

"Then what's the good of it? I'm not goin' anywhere else to live, and if I should the Lord knows how long it would be before they'd go crazy on Socialism."

"Well, then, why don't you keep your invention to yourself? Nobody can compel you to turn it over to the public."

"I don't want to keep it."

"I fear you are hard to please," said President

Bill. "What would you have done with a million dollars under the old system?"

"Bought things, of course—fine horses and carriages, maybe an automobile, a fine house, fine clothes, lived on the best and had leisure to do as I pleased."

"But you can have all those things as it is; everybody can have them. Your age exempts you from compulsory work; automobiles are as easily made as penny tops, and all who wish may have them, the slight excess of labor involved in the construction of autos counting nothing in a society that has no other purpose than the supplying of human needs and desires; your living cannot fall short of the best, since nothing but the best is demanded by and for all and the same holds good in regard to your other specifications. What more do you want?"

"If everybody's goin' to have all them things, I shouldn't want 'em. No use o' havin' God-given genius if it ain't to be rewarded extry recompense over a common clodhopper."

"Oh, you want to be exclusive, do you?"

"Yes, sir-ee!"

"You'd better be trotting along then," advised the president, "for you won't meet with any encouragement around here. I should think that the gods who have already so signally fa-

vored you might be induced to further hump themselves in your behalf. Maybe, having already furnished you with the idea of a steam plow, they will furnish you with a little principality of your own in which your clod-hopping slaves can run the plow and where you can be as exclusive as you like. We have had too much exclusiveness in this country and are now trying to get along with less of it."

"I don't care," said the crank wrathfully and spitefully, "you don't get the machine, anyhow."

"We don't want your old concern," declared Oldrem, impatiently. "Even if it will do all you claim for it we've already perfected a plow that will do three times the work of yours and will, besides, harrow the ground, plant the seed, level and roll, all at the same operation."

"You're the champion liar of the universe!" shouted the favorite of the gods, as he stampeded for the street.

"That's the way to rout a liar, Swale," chuckled the president, "tell a bigger one than his and he's all in."

"Never fails," laughed Swale, "but in this instance I was probably telling the truth. Do you know Pink Stannard, formerly state entomologist of California? He has some pretty advanced ideas about agriculture. I met him

uptown this morning; said he'd call at headquarters today or tomorrow. He has worked out a scheme for just such a plow as I mentioned and will explain it to the board when he comes down here. The principle is that two powerful stationary engines, half a mile apart, operate by cable, the gang-plow, harrow, seeder and roller at the same time—that is, one is trailed behind the other. One engine pulls the several implements forward, the other pulls them back, and so on, until the half-section is planted. Then the next half-section is tackled. Simple as rolling off a log."

"Holy Moses!" exclaimed the president, "I have always understood that Socialism was calculated to stifle initiative and paralyze invention."

"So it does," said Swale.

"Will you see this gentleman?" inquired one of the ushers, presenting a card. The card bore the name of the former president whom the fortunes of war had deprived of office, influence, peace of mind and other things too numerous to specify.

"Yes, you may pilot him up," replied the executive, passing the card to Oldrem.

"Think we can hold him down?" asked Swale, with mild astonishment.

"The odds are in our favor; we're two to one—still it would to rash to prophesy."

"Well, don't provoke him, as neither of us carries life insurance."

The present incumbent was all smiles, affability and hospitality. "Dee-lighted!" he declared, rising and cordially extending the gracious mitt to his distinguished visitor.

"I regret that I cannot reciprocate the sentiment," coldly rejoined he who was down and out, and his eye-glasses must have been temporarily blurred, for he could not see the proffered hand, although goodness knows it was large enough not to be hidden under anything much smaller than a bushel.

The P. I. appeared supremely unconscious of the snub. "Permit me to offer you a chair," he went on, "and to present my friend and fellow-strategist, Mr. Swale Oldrem."

The D. and O. ignored the chair, acknowledged the introduction by a frigid nod and glared resentfully and disapprovingly. "'Strategist' is a very smooth example of euphonious terminology," he said, "only down in Washington we have a different name for the wretches who have overthrown law and order, unloosed pandemonium, and to whom anything short of general wrack and ruin does not appeal."

"Oh, of course you're naturally rather sore," replied the P. I., "we expect it and make allowance for it; but you'll get over it in good time. There's no antidote for your complaint except a sufficient duration of the complaint—just as a raging fever, if not interfered with by quacks, feeds itself and cures itself."

"Oh, cut it out! Cut it out!" intemperately flared the D. and O., his nerves going to pieces as if a circuit had been established between them and a live electric wire. "I didn't come here to listen to your insufferable twaddle—I came to talk business."

"Yes, just so; I understand," soothingly remarked the P. I. with a world of sympathy in look and tone. "Under the old regime business always came before pleasure. "But," he added, softly, "we have dropped many of those foolish, pre-Adamitic conceptions of life. In the co-operative commonwealth, now, we first give to pleasure unlimited rope—a sort of let-er-go-Gallagher, let-joy-be-unconfined swing and rhythm, don't you know. After that, if we happen to have any time left over, we not infrequently devote it to business."

The D. and O. writhed in torment. "Fool! ass! dolt or devil!—whatever you are—your blood and the blood of your deluded following be upon your own heads!"

"Fe, fo, fi, fum! I smell the blood of an Englishman," interpolated Swale, guilelessly.

"Who is it talks of blood?" demanded the P. I., melodramatically.

"Who? Why, this hallucinated down-and-outer—he's full of blood—but Socialists have no blood. They have been bled so many centuries by capitalism they're desiccated as a bunch of last year's cornstalks," the "Great Dane" made reply.

"Well, then, by the blood of the Lamb! Let us hear no more of blood," commanded the P. I. "Say, old pard," he went on, addressing the D. and O., "you have all the ear-marks of the twentieth century pathological anomaly. Over in the violent wards at the Polyclinic the attendants call it brainstorm, but I myself diagnose it as exacerbated Dowieism. However, I know what is good for it. Three or four scientifically compounded highballs (and the higher the better) are guaranteed to work wonders, and if you'll come out with me I'll agree to set 'em up."

"Wretch!" gasped the D. and O., faintly, "dog! idiot!"

"That's better," declared the P. I. "You're coming out of it; anybody can see that. All you need is a little more time. You won't miss

your train back to Washington, will you? I should never forgive myself for detaining you past the hour set for your return. Your conversation is certainly elevating, properly altruistic and inexpressibly entertaining—but I do not like to appear selfish. Look me up whenever you're in town. Dee-lighted, don't you know."

"The next time I call on you I'll bring along an argument that you will sit up and take notice of!" shouted the D. and O. with concentrated fury in look and tone.

"Oh, I don't know," retorted the P. I. amiably, "it is perhaps not entirely due to your Christian spirit that you forebore to do so upon this occasion. It's my impression that the Socialists captured the bulk of your ablest and most invincible arguments when they took your Gatlings, Krags and Mausers; and," he added, "they've got 'em yet."

"You won't have them long," predicted the D. and O. "In a few days from now you and your depraved gang will be ornamenting the limbs of trees, lamp-posts and telegraph poles from one end of Manhattan to the other; your outfit of bums that are too proud to work and too honest to let anybody else work will be lying face-down in the gutters; and the stench from

their rotting carcasses cannot appreciably exceed the malodorous emanations from their living bodies."

The P. I. yawned immoderately. "Seems to me I've heard something like that before," he said. "Besides, a Socialist, whether living or dead, couldn't possibly smell worse than a whey-bellied capitalist who is too proud to associate with the workers, but not at all too proud to skin them."

With head high in air the D. and O. was sailing toward the door, disdaining further parley with his unimpressionable plebeian successor.

"Come again when you can't stay so long!" called Swale.

The D. and O. paused in the doorway, drew his fingers suggestively across his throat and disappeared down the stairway.

CHAPTER VII.

When the hostile fleet of the allied European powers had been two and a half days at sea President Tempest decided to get into the game, so he quietly gave the tip to the boys down at Sandy Hook that it was time for the submarine destroyers to be on the move. Outside of the strategy board few people, Socialists or non-Socialists, had so much as heard a rumor that the potentates of the Old World, aghast at the victories of Socialism in the United States and realizing their own impending doom unless the proletarian movement over here should be crushed at the outset, had hurriedly marshalled the pick of their navies and the power of their armies with the instruction to turn back, at whatever cost in human lives, the on rushing tide of democracy. The former captains of industry and the military and civil chiefs of the old officialdom had heard the glad tidings and praised the fates for that blessed touch of fellow-feeling which makes the whole world of privilege loyal kin in time of sore distress, had toasted continental royalty and

drunk confusion to the dreams of agitators, and had prophesied the utter overthrow and swift destruction of the upstarts who preached and, for the moment, practised the preposterous and pernicious doctrines of equality and fraternity—telling themselves that a coalition of anti-Socialists at home and the disciplined troops of Europe's war-lords must rout the red rag of Socialism as the whirlwind scatters chaff. But this joyful intelligence the down-and-out leaders did not hand out to the crowds. They knew that the Socialist executives must necessarily be cognizant of the powerful fleet approaching as rapidly as steam and wind and tide could urge it, yet they appeared strangely apathetic in the face of their certain doom. There was no massing of troops to repel invasion; there was no effort to man and fit out the warships, to drill the necessary crews—in fact there was no apparent effort on the part of the Socialists to do any of the myriad things demanded of those who take by force and who, if they are to retain, must hold by force. The situation was simply anomalous and the antis were compelled to charge it up to the stupidity of the "anarchists" who had to all intents and purposes bitten off more than they could swallow. Instead of doing the things that even

the crudest intelligence must recognize as imperative for a successful revolutionary party the Socialists were actually devoting their military genius to ripping up and seeding millions of acres of western prairie! It was the apotheosis of asininity and the down-and-outers let it go at that, whetting their appetites meanwhile for the coming proletarian feast and devising countless schemes to profit by the reconstruction. When that "puer robustus sed malitiosus," the "common" people, had been uncommonly well thrashed for his presumptuousness, all the most obstreperous revolutionists having meantime been put to death, the harpies of commercialism planned to keep that troublesome "common" boy down where, in their opinion, he belonged. Thus they planned and dreamed their dreams of the future and already in their optimism they saw in full blast again the interrupted pastime of dollar-chasing and lamb-fleecing. But, just as it is said to be only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous, equally facile was the transition from flamboyant optimism to pessimism.

For, truth to tell, the continental allies—those bristling bulldogs of famous pedigree that could bite, as well as show their teeth—had developed symptoms of "cold feet." Or

so, at least, it appeared. They were overdue. They were three days overdue. They hadn't even taken the trouble to send a wireless message of regret; or if they had it had got tangled up with the wrong ethereal current.

And the Socialists planted corn out West and said nothing.

European royalty was routed out of its downy bed to listen to a cabled tale of woe. And royalty was warm under the collar. Its unsympathetic answer was in substance: Fudge! and more fudge; twice as much fudge. Cold feet! Jamais! The bulldogs' feet were all right. That was a cinch. Perhaps a transport had broken a shaft—or a warship's piston had gone wrong—or a cylinder had—oh, fudge! Would the fleet be expected to continue on its way? Or would it wait for the cripple to repair the damage? What earthly difference could a day or two make—besides, was not fleet number two already on the way?

Thus royalty; and the days, as we all used to sing in Sunday school when we were young and not yet disillusioned, were gliding swiftly by. And, after an immemorial fashion of theirs, they kept on gliding swiftly by. The first section of the allied squadron was not only ten days overdue, but the second section was a

truant on the high seas. While it was an indisputable fact that propeller blades, shafts and pistons could not be considered perfect, any more than could the erring mortals who cast them, it was still evident that, allowing the utmost latitude for the divinity that is supposed to hedge a royal guesser, it was almost time for royalty to guess again.

It was at this interesting juncture that the Socialists further complicated the situation by cutting off all communicaion with the outside world.

Then everybody had a guess.

And nobody guessed any oftener or more frantically than those whose august and uneasy heads supported the crowns of Europe. From a sublime confidence that the punitive expedition was proceeding in good order against the international foe, in spite of some necessary and trifling delay, the war-lords became tortured with dark and indefinable forebodings of disaster. Frenzied, racked with nameless fears, they bombarded the Canadian authorities with cablegrams. Canada could throw no light upon the question of an allied fleet that had become lost, had strayed or been stolen. It was not her fleet and she did not share their anxiety—at any rate she did not at

first. She was inclined to be facetious and intimated that she could prove an alibi if accused of sequestering the fleet. Later, when she discovered that the Socialists had cut off all communication with her capitalistic friends down in the States, she was mystified and gravitated to the ranks of the guessers.

And one guess was as good as another. It was an inexpensive amusement and anybody could take a shot. The only drawback was that the bell wouldn't ring if somebody should accidentally happen to hit the bullseye.

The little innocent-looking cloud upon the political horizon that continental rulers and military chieftains had hitherto referred to as Socialistic hot air began to assume an ominous importance. Socialism began to be almost respectable.

From a state of nerve-racking, shuddering suspense that grew more terrifying with every passing hour and affected everybody and everything, from throne to hovel, Europe passed into the panicky period of her seething unrest. Stocks, bonds, consols, securities of every sort, came tumbling down with a crash that shook the card houses of finance as if a seismic shock had passed and kingdoms, empires, principalities and thrones swayed and rocked in sympathy.

There was a hurried and distracted conference of the war-lords, the upshot of which was that another fleet, larger than either of the preceding two, was assembled in hot haste and dispatched after the others with instructions to proceed with the utmost caution, signalling the Continent repeatedly by wireless messages until off the coast of Labrador; then to establish a wireless station on shore under military guard and send hourly bulletins to this station until approaching the New Jersey coast; after which, depending upon circumstances, communication with Europe by cable was to be established as soon as possible, and the line kept open at all hazards, if it took the entire invading force to accomplish it. There was to be no more suspense. Europe was to know the worst and the best and the latest, whatever might be the import of those superlatives, and was to know it all of the time.

The departure of the formidable third flotilla of transports and its imposing convoy of iron-clads (which impressed into the service the bulk of the remaining transatlantic liners, together with many of the passenger steamships flying the flags of the Mediterranean and East Indian companies, and left Europe practically defenseless in the matter of modern war-

ships) seemed to temporarily arrest the financial panic. If only there had been a fourth flotilla to be turned against the unspeakable Socialists! Then indeed the money sharks of christendom would have breathed easier, praising God from whom all blessings flow and from whom, to complete the anology, all catastrophies may be supposed to derive their initiative.

And still the Socialists planted corn in the golden West and hadn't a word to say—just as if wars and rumors of wars and invading fleets and such things had never been invented; they started new towns and tore down old ones; they laid out parks and planted and transplanted trees under the direction of famous landscape gardeners who planned for perennial and enduring beauty, unhampered by the petty and sordid greed, the thousand-and-one insuperable difficulties, the endless conflicts that arise under private ownership of land. Moreover, pretty nearly everybody seemed to be a Socialist. With an enthusiasm that was scarcely to be expected old and young of all sections devoted their energies to the task of reconstruction.

They planted corn, and sawed wood and said nothing: and the elaborately studied silence of the strategy board was a thousand times more

effective than columns and pages of editorial bluster and boastful prophecy would have been. It invested the leaders with a halo of respect that fell little short of the uncanny. While apparently devoting their whole attention to industrial and economic problems the revolutionary chiefs preserved everywhere and to the last vestige the civil and military authority; they anticipated and foiled their enemies' plots; they swayed the popular sentiment with marvelous skill and inaugurated far-reaching policies of state; and last, but far from least, they were earning the somewhat invidious distinction of being in league with the devil to the extent of winning bloodless and supernatural victories at sea—although everybody knew they had not been to sea. And this reputation did not in the least suffer impairment when, having apparently won two such victories, they began to be suspected of bringing off a third; for the latest squadron to leave the shores of Europe was overdue and unaccounted for.

Then the microbe of international democracy began to get busy. Always a vigorous and hardy culture, for it had survived the exterminatory processes of many centuries, it now began to multiply with inconceivable rapidity in its vastly more favorable environment. From a

state of proscription and active hounding by political bacteriologists it emerged from multitudinous obscure corners and boldly assumed the aggressive.

Disastrous and terrifying as was the effect of the disappearance of the third squadron upon the capitalistic crowd over here, it was a mere bagatelle to the cyclone of rage and despair that swept over Europe and racked her rotten and moribund states to their decaying cores. Barring Russia, whose own domestic condition was in such chaos that she could not even think of outside disturbances, much less take a hand in them, not one of the first-class powers escaped frightful penalties for officious and unwarranted butting-in. It was not alone the loss of one hundred and fifty of the finest battleships afloat, practically all of the magnificent ocean liners and more than a million men, all told—this was sufficiently appalling—but by giving the dreaded proletarian movement unbounded courage and a fresh grip everywhere the reactionaries had dug their own graves and paved the way for the very conditions they had fatuously expected to avert.

And at last, nearly a month after the disappearance of the first punitive squadron, the sea

began to give up its ghastly secret, setting at rest all doubt as to the fate of the navy that was the pride and the reliance of European despots. The wind, which had prevailed off-shore uninterruptedly for many days, changed to the east and blew great guns, hurling the dead ashore in windrows and piling the wreckage high along the coast all the way from Halifax to Portland.

And while ten thousand priests said masses for the souls of the dead soldiers and sailors and ten thousand surpliced choirs chanted the Miserere; while consternation seized upon the hearts of tyrants and bowed the heads of proud and haughty kings of finance; while havoc and panic and disaster multiplied and grew by what it fed upon, the cause of the despised proletaire was looking up. Socialism had proved its right to be.

"For Might is right when empires sink in storms of steel and flame,
And it is right when weakling breeds are hunted down like game."

The principle is that of Evolution and goes on forever—but Might is vacillating and transitory, shifting with the fortunes of war now to one combatant, now to another. Otherwise must progress come to a halt. And Evolution,

although progressive, takes no thought of progress. It is inexorably impersonal, caring naught for combatants, nor right nor wrong nor the petty strifes and ambitions of the earth-race that in a few more cycles at the longest will sleep the everlasting sleep upon a planet whose life has been spent, and which wanders cold and frost-bound through the cosmos.

Not a few philosophers found themselves at sea on account of the new alignment of political and economic forces. They had committed the blunder of trying to square evolution with existing intellectual heresies, instead of attempting to explain existing conditions in the light of evolutionary facts. To illustrate:

President Tempest was at his desk at headquarters one morning when a fashionably attired stranger of prepossessing appearance came in. He was carrying a sole-leather bag which he deposited on the floor.

"Sir," he said, addressing the president, "I take off my hat to you," and suited the action to the word.

"If the doffing of your head-gear be a mark of servility the commonwealth does not require it," remarked the president, smiling pleasantly, "but if it be merely a token of civility consider the compliment returned with interest."

"Servility is not in my line," replied the other drily, "but, nevertheless, if you keep up your extraordinary policy of running the state in the face of a hostile christendom we shall all have to pay tribute to your genius. However, that isn't what I came here to say. I am at the forks of the road and know not whether to turn to the right or the left—not that I greatly care —but you and your revolutionary crowd have knocked my philosophy into a cocked hat. I am an evolutionist; I thoroughly believe in the doctrine of the survival of the fittest—meaning to me the strongest. Personally, I have hammered down and crushed whatever opposition I encountered. It was the game, as I understood it. I have succeeded. Which is to say, I imagined I had succeeded. I find I was mistaken—that I did not and do not know the game. It is humiliating. In this grip (he kicked the piece of baggage contemptuously) is all that I have so successfully striven for. It represents in bank notes, government and other bonds and securities, five million dollars. Not a vast fortune, measured by twentieth century standards, but amply sufficient for myself and family.

"This morning I supplied myself with adequate coin of the realm and went over to one

of the government stores to purchase what I required. They literally jeered me off the premises. 'What!' I roared, 'do you mean to say that this gold doesn't go in any community under the sun where the monkeys have got up off their all-fours?' Well—you must pardon my ignorance; I haven't paid much attention to your programme, thinking it couldn't last —it didn't go there. I was told I needn't come around until I could show a certificate for an honest day's work at something useful. Now, is this sort of thing going to keep up? I have a theory——"

President Bill burst into a roar of ringing laughter, in which the capitalist joined perforce.

"My dear sir!" he cried, "you are confronted with a condition, not a theory, as an illustrious predecessor of mine once remarked. Besides, your ideas on evolution are hazy. You may have hammered down opposition in the effete days that presaged the end of capitalism; but you did not do it under the law of the survival of the strongest because that law was subject to another law—the law of injunction. You might have had the puniest antagonist, both mentally and physically, in the world. Yet if his pile had exceeded yours he could have

bought an injunction from the courts and made your strength look like thirty cents. Of course that was only a counterfeit strength and the true law of evolution was temporarily suspended; but during the suspension the injunction held good—it worked. For ages a so-called divine injunction has worked to hold back and abort the strength of the strong, to elevate the weak, the cunning, the tyrannical. Notwithstanding which I declare, and you must agree with me, that history does not record a time when the apparently helpless and exploited masses did not possess the real strength to put an end to tyranny and exploitation. For the first time in history the 'strongest', that is, the masses, are using their strength; and, having a common cause, they use it in common, unitedly."

"But there's a 'nigger' in the woodpile somewhere," said the capitalist. "The masses do not seem to be doing anything except work harder and more cheerfully than ever under the direction of your oligarchic council or strategy board or whatever you call it."

"The disappearing colored gentleman is in your own imagination," declared the president. "My signed resignation is in the hands of the secretary of this board; and in turn the resignation

of each of the strategy board members is in the hands of the district committee which elected him. We are all subject to recall at a moment's notice. The mere fact that we are here is the best proof in the world that we are making good; that we are putting up the kind of government called for in the specifications."

"Maybe so," said the capitalist, only half convinced, "but what about this 'wad' of what I used to call the 'needful' and which it now seems is entitled to be called the 'superfluous'? It represents my life-work and I have brought it here, thinking I might trade it off for something substantial."

"Your pieces of painted paper never had other than a pseudo-fictitious value and they are now reduced to their proper function. They represented what the republic owed rather than what the republic had; they represented inflation, credit, water, unearned increment, interest, blood, sweat, tears and groans; they were accursed and the curse can be removed only by repudiation."

"And will these various debts and obligations now be repudiated?" demanded with a fine scorn the indignant capitalist.

"They most undoubtedly will be, so far as I have any voice in the matter," replied the presi-

dent. "But let's see"—he added, "what value did you return to society for all those bits of engraved paper—what was your business?"

"I was a stock broker; I gave my life to the acquisition of those bits of paper you hold in such contempt; I——"

Again President Bill laughed melodiously and contagiously. "If you were not such a solemn joker," he said, "you would see at a glance that you returned no value whatever for them and that you are a criminal—a legalized criminal, oh, yes; but a criminal just the same—and that any system founded upon retributive justice, instead of altruistic justice, would condemn you to a penal institution until you should have expiated the crime."

The broker's features wore a puzzled expression. "The commonwealth," he said, "has expropriated, or at any rate vitiated, my fortune—does it also purpose to seize upon my house, my furniture, my stables——"

"Not at all, sir; it doesn't seize upon anything you possess, unless you have somewhere real estate which you cannot or do not use."

"Why doesn't it seize my house?—it is a far more pretentious and sumptuously fitted up residence than those occupied by millions of the victorious proletariat."

"Because, sir," replied the president, "the law of expropriation applies only to those forms of wealth which are logically public property, in that their use is necessary to the comfort, happiness and well-being of all. Privately and personally used possessions, no matter how acquired, are not interfered with since it is recognized that in a short time every citizen may in lavish abundance possess not only necessities of existence, but also those things hitherto regarded as luxuries."

The broker stroked his mustache thoughtfully. "Where do I fit in?" he inquired. "If I've got to earn my living you can set me to work as soon as you please."

"I think we may find a place for you somewhere," assured the executive. "There is no end of clerical work——"

"Not for me—" declared the other. "I want to get out into the country on a farm. It is where I have always looked forward to retiring when I had piled up enough millions to run one in good shape. You and your bunch of iconoclasts have shattered my beautiful financial air-castle, but I shall, it seems, all the sooner realize the ultimate object for which the castle was constructed."

"Just so," agreed the president. "It is where

I'm going as soon as we can get in shape to hold an election to provide my successor."

"Is that so, now?" queried the broker, beaming with delight to discover that they had a common hobby.

"Sure as guns—think I'd live in a damned stuffy hole like New York if I wasn't obliged to? I should say not."

"What shall I do with this?" asked the broker, bestowing another savage kick upon the bag that contained his worthless millions.

"Anything you like. Keep it for a souvenir."

"Hasn't it any value whatever?"

"Sentiment aside, no."

The capitalist opened up his grip. "Here is a package containing 250 thousand-dollar treasury gold certificates," he said. "Now let's have some fun. There's a group of street arabs playing marbles or some other game down in the yard below. I'm going to toss this wad amongst them and see the scramble."

"There won't be any scramble. Those kids know very well that bank notes are out of date," declared the president.

"Bet you a box of good cigars."

"Gambling is out of date as well as bank notes. Throw them down and you'll find you are mistaken."

Out of the open window sailed the roll of magic lure that a few short weeks ago would have incited to every crime in the Decalogue and a few thousand other crimes not there enumerated. It struck the closely-cropped turf, rebounded and landed fairly in the centre of the group of urchins. They glanced up at the building, but the conspirators had backed out of range. The latter peered cautiously over the window ledge to see what would happen.

"Gee! kids, git onto the mazuma," cried one, tearing off the wrapper.

"Huh! that ain't no good," retorted another, making a vicious pass at the wad with his bare foot.

"Aw—I know it ain't," conceded the first speaker, "but I'm goin' to carry it home and tell me maw I'm Rockyfellow."

"Say, fellers! I got er hunch," announced one youth on the edge of the crowd, producing a package of cigarettes. "I'll give youse all er snipe an' we'll light 'em wit' t'ousand-dollar bills. Dey was er Willie-boy onct wot done it, an' he was de king-pin of all de high-rollin' swells on Fift' avenue—somebody gimme er match."

This idea met with instant favor and they lost no time in putting it into practice. Strut-

ting and swaggering they pre-empted the nearest street corner and with exaggerated gravity and many solemn antics, so that the passing crowd might appreciate the full significance of the sacrifice, they lighted their cigarettes with the twisted rolls of bills, conspicuously strewing the sidewalk with the partially consumed paper that so recently had been mankind's only god.

"Well, I'll be damned!" declared the broker, "that takes the wind out of my sail. If thousand-dollar bills have become cigarette lighters for street gamins the next thing we may look for is to see the preachers using the holy bible to stuff horse collars."

"That's what we're coming to."

"Good heavens!" cried the broker, "where and when is all this iconoclasm going to end?"

"When the last fantastic popular image is shattered beyond patching up."

"And after that——"

"After that," said President Bill, terminating the interview, "the race will have time to set up and worship a new lot of images."

CHAPTER VIII.

Headquarters, Co-operative Commonwealth,
New York, July 4.

TO THE SOCIALIST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND ALL LOYAL COMRADES—GREETINGS:

For the first time in a century and a-third this anniversary of the beautiful, historical and much-needed walloping your swell-headed ancestors took at the hands of their rebellious kinsmen this side of the dividing pond has been ushered in without the accompaniment of cannon, bells, fish-horns and fire-crackers. I have no word of condemnation or apology for the practice what time it lasted since the two nations were not only rivals in militarism and the subjugation of defenseless peoples, but were even keener rivals in the cut-throat game of commercialism. As long as nations exist solely for mutual slaughter and extermination, whether by sword or industrial competition, it does not seem inappropriate that the victors celebrate. Having removed ourselves from the battleground of international strife and jealousies, victory and defeat become alike impossible and meaningless; and such

celebrations fall of their own inertia into moss-grown desuetude.

I note with interest (not untinctured with amusement) that your Parliament, just prorogued after a stormy extra session, has, aided and abetted by the government, abolished the House of Lords; that the law of primogeniture is repealed; that some millions of acres, heretofore reserved for the exclusive enjoyment of royal-blooded quail hunters, have been made accessible to the hoi polloi on shockingly easy terms; that the government has become extraordinarily paternalistic—so mollycoddling, in point of fact, that it seems that not much of anything is too good for the poor, patient workingman; and, finally, that the aforesaid poor and patient British proletarian, touched to the quick by so much condescension and solicitude (he has often in the past been touched to the quick by royalty, but never in quite the same way) is simply overwhelmed with gratitude toward his little-father-with-the-big-waist-band. Alas and alack! It is well for the fisherman's boy that he sings in his boat on the bay; and it is well for us over here that the British workingman has manifested the proper amount and quality of thankfulness toward his royal benefactor. Because if his reasoning had been reversed—if he had once tumbled to the fact that royalty was throwing overboard so much special privilege simply to keep itself from functioning as shark-bait—

I for one should have dropped dead. And I don't consider that I'm good enough to die just yet. There are on my conscience sundry sins of omission, although I am not at this time and place going to confess what they are.

Well, when the proletaire anglais really decides that he would rather be an orphan and go it alone than to have even such a nice paternalistic papa as the kind fates have given him, maybe the commonwealth can hand him out a pointer or two. In the meantime God save his papa and him too!—with the trite advice thrown in for good measure that, in case of "man overboard," God mostly and more numerously saves those who are the best swimmers.

And how fares the commonwealth? Just you ask it! If you can find anybody over here who wants to go back to throat-cutting I'll give him a first-class passage to London town. Say! you'd consider me a reincarnated Munchausen if I should attempt to describe to you how smoothly the Socialist band-wagon is running since the continental allies perished in that "tidal wave," as Emperor Bill of Germany says they did. He ought to know for he und Gott used to study out of the same book at school and have been tolerably chummy ever since. I consider it a rather scurvy trick, though, to play off upon an old chum like Bill.

But although we are not today commemorating the handsome drubbing our revolu-

tionaries of the long ago gave to the minions of old King George the nation is nevertheless en fete. We are taking a week or ten days off and everybody is on the hike, picnicking, feasting drinking, excursioning, with much brave tinsel, brass bands, oratory, red fire and flapdoodle. Why not? The comrades have worked heroically and accomplished wonders during the short existence, to date, of the commonwealth. Our time is our own and if we want to celebrate our economic freedom there's nobody to say us nay. We're truly a happy family and hundreds of thousands of former exploiters of their kind are extolling the benefits of cooperation and wondering why the old system did not sooner cave in.

I am not, however, going to wear out the cable with descriptions of our fraternal relations, the wonderful things we've done already and the far more wonderful things we are planning to do in the future. You must come over and see for yourselves, which you are herewith cordially invited to do at your first opportunity.

With fraternal regards,

WILLIAM TEMPEST,
(Pres't. pro tem.)

About a week after the forwarding of the above cablegram President Tempest and more than a hundred strategists and department officials were assembled in the old Astor House,

holding a jollification. It was 9:30 P. M. and a five-gallon punch bowl was being drained and replenished with such surprising frequency and regularity that the more speculative guests were beginning to wonder how long the cellar would stand the run. And while the punch was disappearing and champagne corks were popping the topic on every tongue was Continental Europe, whose kaleidoscopic metamorphoses during the preceding month had been almost too rapid to follow. Out of the crash and wreck of staggering and falling empires, out of the chaos of bankruptcy, with credit gone a-glimmering to the stars above, out of the dust and smoke and flame and din, shoulder to shoulder, standing like a rock, their vision clear at last after weary centuries of being sport of kings: the proletariat were marching into their own. And before that steady, resistless host, aflame with the urge of immemorial wrongs, special privilege faded as morning mist before the wind.

Between drinks they sang Socialist songs, roasted old-world royalty and spread themselves in flights of extemporaneous oratory. Somebody had facetiously toasted Emperor Bill of Germany and while the comrades filled their glasses Cash Humboldt, the pre-eminent

and undisputed leader of the strategist aggregation of warblers, improvised a parody on "Is It Warm Enough for You?" and, with brimming glasses poised high in air, the whole assembly roared out the chorus with a vim that rattled the windows:

"Is it warm enough for you—do you think that it will do?
And was the walking pretty good when they told you to skidoo?
Will your heart turn to the Rhine in the good old summertime?
They've cut off your pay in Deutscherland—say! is it warm enough for you?"

The last bars of the refrain had scarcely died away when a clamorous shout was raised down by the main entrance. "Oldrem! Stevens! Mercereau! rah, rah, rah!" and as the three redoubtable strategists, accompanied by a tall and swarthy stranger, hove into view a perfect storm of cheering broke loose; for the trio had not set foot upon American soil since they plunged into the sea off Sandy Hook with the saucy little fleet of submarines to give battle to the mightiest of Europe's floating Gibraltars. Their mission in that respect accomplished, they parted company with the rest of the fleet and kept right on across the water to take a hand in the social and political upheavals that racked the Old World from centre to circumfer-

ence. The stranger was none other than Bertram Revenski, the intrepid and spectacular leader of the Russian Socialists. When the tumult of welcome, handshaking and congratulation had subsided and the punch bowl had been properly patronized, President Tempest rapped for order.

"Gentlemen," he said, "it is a rare pleasure to introduce to you Comrade Revenski who will favor us with a brief outline of the progress our cause is making in the land that erstwhile has been characterized as Unhappy Russia. That the conditions which made for her widespread wretchedness and national unrest have been materially modified, if not altogether removed, is due to the remarkable personnel of a numerically small band of revolutionaries of whom Comrade Revenski is chief and who, practically unaided, have fought and won the battle of the Russian proletariat, reorganized the government and paved the way for liberty that is something more than a tyrant's whim, justice that does not mock, equality that is not enforced by sabre and knout and fraternity that is worthy of the name."

With a slightly foreign accent but speaking in excellent idiomatic English, for his education had been completed at a British university, the distinguished Russian leader said:

"Comrades—I am come to you out of the far Northland with a message of fraternity and good cheer. 'Unhappy' though we were—'Darkest Russia' indeed, we were stigmatized by a world that looked but yesterday with shuddering incredulity upon the vastness of our ancient empire, the cruel despotism of our warlords, the degradation, sullen indifference, and hopelessness of our swarming millions, the barbaric splendor of our officialdom, the lights and shades, the contrasts, the dreams of scholastics that were our strength, the dreams of world-wide dominion that were our weakness—it nevertheless affords me a somewhat childish and egotistical satisfaction to proclaim that Russia (although you ran us a close second and furnished us, in *sizmos*, the golden key that unlocked the door of liberty) was actually the first of the nations to break the stranglehold of capitalism. [Prolonged cheering.]

"By an obsessed, a fatuous and venal church whose breath of life was the ignorance and superstition of the enslaved masses; by a hypocritical and cruel state that had long ago by its tyrannies forfeited its right to be; by a discredited press whose only law was the nod and beck of special privilege; by the millions of schemers who lived by cunning and ate their

daily bread in the sweat of honest labor—we are accused of merely substituting one oligarchy for another infinitely preferable, of tearing down in willful and wanton mania for destruction venerable institutions we lacked the constructive ability to replace.

"Be this as it may, no man in Russia today is living luxuriously off the toil of another man; the only caste is the cast-iron enforcement of the law of equal opportunity for all, special privilege to none; unearned increment is a nightmare that has been exorcised by steel, purged by flame and drowned in the blood of sacrifice; and throughout the length and breadth of czardom, but so recently over-run by the brutal flunkeys of militarism, the millions of her disinherited children are turning with expectant eyes and grateful hearts toward the rising sun of Socialism, happy in the present and trustful for the future. [Cheers].

"And yet, when I contrast your orderly and bloodless revolution with the violence that accompanied our own triumph over the forces of reaction, I am not only filled with a certain compunction for the many thousand human lives so prodigally fed into the red maw of the revolution, but our efforts by comparison smack of crudeness and a barbarity more in

keeping with some remote age when the world was younger and men were demi-brutes. If, however, you will reflect that practically a fourth of the United States was Socialistic—in sentiment, at least—while we, with nearly double your population, depended for our fighting strength upon a scant two hundred thousand trusty comrades, nearly a third of whom were students not out of their teens, you will comprehend at a glance that our policy was necessarily drastic.

"Plentifully supplied with the dread *sizmos,* whose detonation is so truly frightful that whole battalions drop dead from the violence of its concussion, our little handful of revolutionists made concerted demonstrations in all the principal centres of population throughout the empire. We struck at Authority wherever we found it entrenched and struck without mercy, as it had hitherto struck at us.

"We struck at the royal palace and not one stone was left upon another; but the czar, the royal consort and their children, possibly through timely warning, more probably by mere coincidence, had just quitted the palace by a secret passage.

"We demolished forts, military barracks and strongholds as easily as if their ponderous masonry had been papier-mache, inevitably and

necessarily slaughtering their garrisons by tens of thousands. It was cruel—ay; but it was our only way to compete with tyranny. Lacking the requisite numbers to overpower and disarm opposition, as did the comrades over here, self-preservation compelled us to destroy it. All the violently reactionary members of the aristocracy—the grand dukes, princes of the empire, Romanoff tyrants and proprietors of vast landed estates—shared the same fate. They had all shed proletarian blood in rivers and justice was vindicated rather than outraged when their blood was shed.

"These are the darker pictures of our struggle and victory over the vicious system that is everywhere meeting its Waterloo; and I gladly turn to the brighter page of world-emancipation under the banners of international Socialism. We are reorganizing in conformity with its principles. Our leaders are enthusiastic, our scholars are grappling with the knotty details of programme and our masses are eager and hopeful. We are true esperantists.

"Socialism is here and here to stay. It is scientific and in harmony with the workings of evolution, notwithstanding the dictum of sophists that it conflicts with the law of the sur-

vival of the fittest or strongest. Such conflict does not nowadays exist outside of the perverted imagination of apologists for a moribund system. For while it is inevitable that the strongest shall survive (if necessary at the expense of the weak) it does not follow that the strongest, having at hand in the utmost abundance the means of survival, shall nevertheless persist in a continuous and senseless warfare for what may be freely had by all without a struggle. In other words it is no longer a question of anybody's survival. It is simply a question of distribution.

"But you will pardon my discursive dialectics. I am arguing Socialism with you who have sounded all its "depths and shoals" as if I were addressing a primary class of Hottentots. Socialism is an accomplished fact. The nations of Europe are falling over one another to get into line. The red flag of international brotherhood will soon wave over the whole earth and international boundary lines will be forgotten. War will become a lost art and the struggle of a united earth-race will be confined to fighting earthquakes and mosquitoes, dodging erratic comets and providing against the far-off but inevitable day when some innocent-looking joker shall get up in Sunday school

and suggest that the government start a mint for the purpose of coining a medium of exchange. [Applause].

"Comrades, I thank you for your courteous attention. I am only a transitory bird of passage and tomorrow morning shall be flitting back to Europe where unfinished work is still cut out for me. I crossed the pond just to say Howdy; but if I must be more explicit will own that I was dying of curiosity to ascertain exactly how one of your little submarine persuaders would behave down amongst the fishes. I would cheerfully turn encomiast, but they so recently spoke for themselves that any flattery of mine, however fulsome, would be like offering you stale beer after filling you up on extra dry vintage. Suffice it to say that it will be many a long day before another ironclad pokes her nose out of a foreign port with a chip balanced jauntily on her figurehead.

"Again thanking you in behalf of the Russian comrades whom you so signally aided in their struggle for freedom, permit me in closing to assure you that when the roll of honor shall be made up—when the future monumental shaft commemorative of a world unchained shall be raised as high into the arching vault as mortals hands and human ingenuity can

send it—carved highest of all on its memorial tablet that rests among the clouds will be the name of the Socialist Strategy Board of America—the comrades who did things while others talked and dreamers dreamed their dreams." [Prolonged applause, followed by punch all round and ad libitum.]

Over in one corner of the big reception room Oldrem, Stevens and Mercereau were holding an impromptu levee surrounded by a bunch of rooters who kept the atmosphere resonant with their encouraging plaudits, blue with tobacco smoke and vibrant with the noisy popping of corks and clinking of glasses. Oldrem was in a particularly happy and communicative mood.

"Yes," said Swale, between drinks, "the capitalistic hogs of Europe are on the run. Those famous Gadarene swine that you've read about wouldn't get under the wire one, two, three.

"When Stevens, Mercereau and I were armed by President Bill with our commissions as envoys-extraordinary and ministers-plenipotentiary to represent the new commonwealth at the courts of old-world royalty we decided to go by the subaqueous route. We chose that route because an astrologer had told us that the stars had warned him of the imminence of

a succession of tidal waves. Sure enough, the stars had peddled out inside information, for we saw three gallant squadrons of brave, but foolhardy, soldiers and sailors overwhelmed by the predicted phenomenon. It was calamitous, but all we could do was to lie low. I think Mercereau said a prayer or two for 'em, though it didn't seem to do much good.

"Well—there's no use crying for spilt milk or grieving for the water that has gone over the dam—we kept right on across the pond with our credentials. The first place we stopped at was Berlin. There we found things in joyous, though somewhat inextricable confusion. At the station we encountered a shoemaker marching up and down the square. He was drunk us a lord and was followed by a crowd of four or five thousand. The whole outfit, led by the shoemaker, who had a truly remarkable basso profundo voice, for a little cuss, was singing ribald and revolutionary songs. We halted him.

"'Where's that Potsdam place?' we inquired.

"'Well,' said the shoemaker with an unsteady lurch, 'you are liable to find pieces of it most any old damn place. We blowed it up last night with that *seezmouss,* already yet;' and off he staggered, roaring out the refrain of a highly

treasonable ditty, the penalty for publicly singing which a few weeks earlier would have been twenty years in the calaboose.

"'Oh, sizmos!' we cried, 'what crimes are committed in thy name.'

"We found the whole city given over to feasting and mirth. Everywhere we saw the crowds celebrating in tumultuous joy their escape from a rule that had been labeled 'divine' but which, now that it was over, was more frequently described by a different adjective. Bands were playing in the squares, Socialist orators were spouting to the disenthralled multitudes, proletariat and bourgeoisie were bumping steins in the beer halls—in short, it was a replica of the scenes enacted over here when the titles to special privilege were vacated by the Socialist writ of ouster.

"In the old army headquarters of the Emperor's guard we located Meyerhoff and the executive committee. There, surrounded by several thousand importunate burghers whose status quo had been lost in the recent political shuffle, and aided by most of the Socialist members of the old Reichstag, they were dispensing more justice in a minute than all the Hohenzollerns, Guelphs, Hanoverians, Hapsburghers and Brandenburghs that ever lived and died

had dispensed in the sum total of their lifetimes.

"Emperor Bill, the swaggerer, the poseur, had been given just twenty-four hours in which to put a fresh supply of starch on his upper lip and get off German soil. He had sailed for England accompanied, in the first place, by all the royalty, divinity and snobbery his yacht would accommodate; and, in the second place, by the jeering yells, taunts and maledictions of the hundred thousand or so overjoyed Social-democrats who had assembled to see him off.

"We visited in turn Austria, Belgium, Italy and Spain. We found the royal palaces closed for repairs. Their former occupants had gone to England for their health. Nobody had ever before imagined that the British climate was so salubrious for ailing royalty. Representatives of the people were in charge of the various and several governments, quiet and order were the ruling characteristics, contentment and happiness had supplanted the former struggle for existence and it is reasonably safe to say that it will be a long time before exploiters again do business at the old stand.

"France we found peaceful and contented, and well advanced toward her dream of the co-operative commonwealth.

"Of course it was simply impossible that we should come home without having paid our respects to the distinguished ruler of the empire for which the sun has such a liking that it never leaves it. Arriving in London we made our way to Buckingham palace and sent up our cards. After the necessary quantity of red tape had been unwound we were informed that his gracious kinglets would receive us. An usher escorted us up the grand staircase and down a long corridor at the far end of which stood a gigantic and gorgeous flunkey, bewigged and powdered, with purple knee-breeches, yellow sash, and scarlet coat buttoned up to his chin, which was held at the proper angle by the highest and starchiest collar you ever saw. Perfectly motionless he stood, his red and beefy countenance sphinx-like in expression, his solemn eyes staring into vacancy.

"'This looks as if we had to dig up before we get any farther,' murmured Stevens, searching his pockets for a nickel.

"'Pinch him,' advised Mercereau, 'he's probably got a fit.'

"But before this suggestion could be carried out the flunkey's flaming countenance exploded in a long drawn 'P-s-t! Back hup!'

"'That sounds to me more like a signal to go ahead,' observed Mercereau, pensively.

"'You don't get on to his curves,' declared Stevens. 'He evidently means that the king has got his back up this morning.'

"'W'en I 'old the door hopen,' proceeded the gorgeous functionary, paying no heed to our remarks, 'ye'll 'ave to back hup to the throne w'ere 'is gracious majesty awaits ye. Back hup, now, or hoff goes hall yer 'eads!'

"Saying which, he threw open the door and in we marched.

"'P-s-t! Take hoff yer 'ats an' back!' frantically hissed the horrified lackey, but court etiquette wasn't in our line.

"'How-do, Tummy,' was Stevens' plebeian salutation, as he advanced with cordially extended hand. 'We hope your majesty is feeling like a fighting cock this morning.'

"The fat little monarch drew himself up haughtily and complained in tones of deep disgust: 'You people remind me of a bunch of Connecticut Reubs. To what do I owe this—er—extraordinary intrusion?'

"'You owe it,' said Stevens, 'principally to our sympathy. Considering the pack of royal bums you've got around you—seems to be a royal flush almost; a four-flush, at any rate—

we thought we'd drop in and let you know that we feel sorry for you. We appreciate the fact that you are playing in hard luck. You must be down to your last stack of chips."

"'By God! I am in hard luck if anybody ever was!' disconsolately and peevishly swore the monarch. 'Nobody on earth knows how I'm pestered and hounded and bully-ragged by the string of also-rans that consider my palace a hospital for all the broken-down, string-halted, knock-kneed, spavined and short-winded royalty of Europe. You may call them a royal flush if you want to—I call 'em a pack of discards, although every last one of 'em is a four-flusher, beyond a doubt. I'm getting sick and tired of it. Why, they want to run the kingdom for me!—and that, after the pitiful, holy show they've made running their own kingdoms! Only last night that palsied freak they used to call the German Emperor, after having done me at poker out of a year's income, had the gall to offer to put up his winnings in a game of freeze-out for my throne! The nerve of these thankless vipers is something fierce!' concluded the wretched sovereign, brushing away a brace of scalding tears.

"'Never mind, Tummy,' I put in consolingly, 'they're jealous because you've got a crowd of

jaspers that'll stick by you through thick and thin — why don't you lock 'em up in the Tower?'

"'Don't call me Tummy!' cried the king in a rage, 'that's what that swaggering bully from Potsdam calls me; and the next time he does it into the Tower he goes. Because I'm his uncle he thinks he can be as fresh as he pleases; but there's a limit to the ties of consanguinity.'

"'Consanguinity is good; did you get that out of the revised version?' I asked him.

"'Never mind where I got it. You Yankee pigs aren't so smart anyway.'

"'We're too modest to brag,' I said.

"'Oh, damn you!' he burst out in a passion, 'your very presence here is nothing but brag and bluster. What do you want, anyhow? You've turned the rest of Europe into a slaughter-house—have you come to debauch my people also?'

"'If the gang of bloodsuckers your people are at present supporting do not incite to parricide, fratricide, regicide and suicide, I am positive that nothing we could say or do would have any effect upon them,' declared Stevens.

"'Well,' retorted the monarch wearily, 'I don't care what happens. It can't be any worse than it is now. If I could put some of these

discards to work I'd be willing to go to work myself.' He waved his royal mitt as a signal that the interview was terminated.

"'Cheer up, Tummy,' we said, as we quitted the royal atmosphere, 'if worse comes to worst and we can do anything to help you out let us know.'"

Then Stevens and Mercereau had to entertain the crowd with their impressions of life on the Continent, so that it was late when the gathering broke up; but it is gratifying to be able to state that the cellar was equal to the demands made upon it, that nobody was obliged to go home thirsty and that none had cause to complain of either the quantity or quality of his entertainment.

CHAPTER IX.

It is autumn and the co-operative commonwealth has been established six months. Vast as are the changes that have taken place in this brief time they are merely an earnest of the incomparably grander ones in contemplation by an ambitious people whose efforts are no longer paralyzed by the mill-stone of competition.

Perhaps the most noteworthy and significant feature of the co-operative regime, so far, is the mental metamorphosis, so to speak, of the erstwhile opponents of Socialism, not one in ten thousand of whom would dream of going back to the former wasteful, unsound and profitless economic and industrial lottery where the prizes were so few and the wretchedness so complete. Opposition had not been crushed or frightened into submission: it had simply died a natural death when divorced from the reactionary literature it fed upon and, having immediate and tangible proof of the benefits of the new system, it had faded away as fades eventually the memory of a disturbing

dream. It was fear that had kept alive the hideous and unending battle of place and power—a fear and distrust inherited from the long ago when a primeval earth-race fought ceaselessly in the struggle for survival. With the cessation of the struggle vanished the fears to which the struggle had in the first place given rise. Moreover, as the problem of existence lost by elimination its haunting terror the racial energy which had been so conspicuously misdirected, encouraged to the limit as it was by a signally altruistic press, turned impetuously to enterprises of such magnificence, utility and beneficence that the sordid pursuit of dollar-grabbing, as previously practised, appeared not only inexcusable, but tame and puerile beyond expression.

Another remarkable phase of the brief try-out of Socialistic principles was the way the question of compensation had been settled. Or, more strictly, had settled itself. It had always been the bane, the crux, the despair of even the most advanced and clear-thinking of the Socialists themselves to work out a theory of remuneration that would be absolutely, or even approximately, just and satisfactory to all. And in addition to being the rock upon which Socialists had split into factions whose one com-

mon ground was that they agreed to disagree, it had been the shining target for capitalistic jibes and sneers without end ever since the philosophy of Marx obtained sufficient vogue to be at all noticed by its opponents.

How would the lazy and inefficient, the shirkers, drones and parasites be recompensed commensurably with their productivity or lack of productivity? In view of the undeniable fact that superiority in quantity or quality of production destined for the collective use should receive superior reward over mediocrity or inferiority, how would or could a pay-system based upon the labor-hour as a unit equalize these variant, several and multifarious talents, capacities and results so that, without discrimination, each should receive his proportionate share?—and if it couldn't be done who or what could allay or prevent widespread popular discontent? Furthermore, it being self-evident that some occupations, after making all possible allowance for variations in taste, are more desirable than others, who would be assigned to the undesirable, though perhaps equally necessary, tasks? Or, granting that a sort of civil service based upon percentage in examinations were adopted, how about the preponderating millions whose services as common laborers would put them out-

side of the classified lists? Who or what would keep them contented with their prosaic drudgery while others reveled in "snaps?" And how, with all workers actually as well as theoretically equal, would the hard-working farmer, whose occupation was most important of all, be contented to wear coarse raiment and dwell in a humble farm cottage, while kid-gloved dudes, whose labor-product was infinitely less valuable to society, enjoyed the best of everything and lived in elegance?

Such are a few of the myriad questions propounded by the scoffers, and Socialists themselves had never felt quite clear as to some of them, for they involved considerations of tactics and programme that were subject to an infinite variety of conditions and would have to be threshed out separately as they came up in actual practice and pressed for solution.

But, as intimated, they had thus far appeared to adjust themselves almost automatically and to the satisfaction of everybody concerned. The revelation came while the strategy board, assisted by the ablest talent it could draw upon, was losing sleep in the laudable, if futile, endeavor to formulate a working schedule of hours and a general scale of wages (payable in labor-checks) that should be at once comprehensive,

scientific, equitable, generally applicable and, not least in importance, satisfactory to the greatest number. In the intensity of its zeal the committee had traced man from his earliest history to modern times, had ransacked every philosophy under the sun and investigated every system of political economy extant in the vain hope of somewhere finding the key to the riddle that seemed equally perplexing and elusive. Not content with this the "Esperantist," the official organ of the board, had sent out the call for volunteer opinions and suggestions. In response to this call a young fellow out in the department of Kansas, a civil engineer, sent in what appeared to be the solution they were looking for. A portion of his communication is appended:

> Ever since the middle of May I have been connected with the "flying" engineering corps, as it is locally called, on account of its erratic and itinerant movements. During this time we have surveyed more than a hundred townsites and numerous branch railroads in widely scattered sections of this department of the commonwealth. It is officially estimated that more than thirty million workers, or more than half our adult population, have been engaged in the department sometime during the season and I have made the most of my somewhat exceptional opportunity to mingle with these peo-

ple and ascertain their views on questions of paramount importance as affecting the successful operation and stability of our new departure in the line of government. Now, while I am probably too young and inexperienced (22) to have formed very decided political opinions, the philosophy of Socialism had never particularly appealed to me and I will confess to serious misgivings as to the practicability of its tenets at this period of our national development. And although my previous sentiments have undergone a radical change, I realize that upon our determination of the questions raised in your referendum to the people rests, for some generations to come at least, the fate of the co-operative principle itself.

Having in the meantime become a proponent of Socialism I cannot, without the gravest apprehension, contemplate a change from our present and most satisfactory regime of laissez faire to any system of hard and fast rules by which the enthusiasm that now animates the people may turn to discord, jealousy and petty dissensions without end.

Under what may be described as Socialistic, or non-competitive, anarchy—if indeed our present anomalous industrial condition can be expressed in terms of comprehension—we are united and happy. A most quixotic spirit of emulation pervades all departments of workers. The ego of the race has for the time being dropped com-

pletely out of sight and the hearts of the nation are beating rhythmically in anticipation of the splendid material achievements outlined by President Tempest in his several proclamations. And at this crucial moment, when individualism and selfishness have yielded to considerations of national aggrandizement, to attempt to measure this altruistic zeal of the masses in terms of the huckster—so much remuneration for so much inspiration—appears to me most hazardous. We are doing things. We are working together—all our heterogeneous melange of colors, races, creeds and conditions—and our aim is national achievement, national regeneration and national glory that taxes no other nation to support. Why, I have this summer observed thousands and tens of thousands of comrades working eighteen and twenty hours a day because of their eagerness to finish some needed improvement. And this spirit is general, not sporadic.

In some future day when the vast public works in contemplation are nearing completion and the workers have abundant leisure to foster jealousies and selfishness, I can imagine a situation calling for state interference and regulation. * * * * * Just now, however, the commonwealth is, without fuss or feathers, usurping the functions once attributed to deity: which is to say, it is building a new earth. If the job when completed be sufficiently satisfactory who can say whether it will not also attempt

a new heaven? But if heaven be not a place at all—merely a state of mind—perhaps we have it now.

Fraternally yours,
CLARENCE BYERS.

The upshot of this communication was that the president referred the proposition to the whole country and appointed a day for balloting. Laissez faire was carried overwhelmingly. It was, of course, understood that the question could be resubmitted at any time by petition. Meanwhile, it was also understood that everybody was entitled to make requisition upon the general stores for anything in reason he or she could use, that the word luxury was stricken from the lexicon, whatever was desired being regarded as a necessity, up to the capacity of the commonwealth for turning it out. Moreover there was nothing in the constitution against increasing the capacity of any plant until it should prove adequate to meet the demand. As a matter of fact the government had thus far been so liberal in providing for and anticipating the wants of the populace that many millions of former wage-slaves, accustomed as they were to the most wretched daily fare and poverty-stricken surroundings, so far from being bothered with any troublesome unfulfilled longings, merely wondered in a dim, pathetic way, char-

acteristic of their kind, how long their paradise would last before going bankrupt.

Perhaps of all the metamorphoses under co-operation plantation life, which is the evolution of the old-time farmer's existence, furnishes the most striking example of progress, as it certainly offers the most normal and healthful programme of outdoor occupation and at the same time the attractions, distractions and recreations of city life—a sort of rus in urbe, or perhaps more accurately, urbe in rus combination. To describe one of these plantations would require a volume in itself; but, superficially, a plantation consists of a block of land twenty miles square with its townsite in the centre of the tract. Rapid-transit railways and swift auto-barges transport the workers to and from all sections of the plantation. Power-driven machinery of various types does all that machinery can do and those who work in the forenoon have the afternoon to themselves and vice versa.

The towns at these centres are, or when completed will be, models of beauty and utility, modern in every respect, fire-proof, sanitary and luxurious. Kankakee, near the old town of that name in the one-time state of Illinois, is farthest advanced toward completion and a brief description will be given.

The site contains sixteen square miles, or in other words is four miles square. In the centre of the square is a park of 640 acres, a square mile, and near the centre of the park is an artesian well—an automatic gusher—its own force carrying the water up to the immense glass tank more than ninety feet in air. The tower that supports this tank is of singular architectural beauty and is a landmark for many miles around. It has a steam service connected to prevent freezing in winter and a cold storage attachment to chill the distributing pipes in summer.

At each corner of this park is an immense public building—a mammoth department store in which is carried everything under the sun; a magnificent town hall on another corner; a heat, light, power and cold-storage plant on a third corner and on the fourth the public garage.

Back of the department store which, with its numerous warehouses, covers thirty acres of ground, is the handsome railroad station; and beneath the station is the subterranean net-work of freight and passenger tracks, the freight sheds, platforms and elevators—for all the railroads centering in Kankakee approach by an underground viaduct three hundred feet wide, twenty-five feet high and perfectly lighted in

daytime by prismatic glass reflectors and at night by electricity. This viaduct extends entirely across the city from east to west and beneath the station and general storehouses is in places three-quarters of a mile wide.

No street in Kankakee is less than two hundred and fifty feet wide, many are five hundred and the boulevards, one of which entirely circles the town, are eight hundred feet in width. All are laid with a new composition in which are blended asphaltum, tar, crushed stone and a peculiar red clay from the Minnesota banks of the Mississippi. The result is a tough, durable compound having a slight resiliency. It is far less brittle and slippery than the old asphalt or concrete roads.

The sidewalks are one of the striking novelties of the town. They are from thirty-five to a hundred feet wide, according to the width of the street, are of pressed and glazed brick of contrasting colors—old blue, dark red, buff and pure white—laid in various fancy patterns like tiling and have, on account of their oddity of conceit, attracted much comment, mostly favorable; yet some have criticised it as smacking too strongly of vanity. At all events the good matrons and maids of the town have thus far evinced a religious zeal in keeping them spotlessly clean, play-

ing the hose on them frequently during the day.

There are at present a dozen large hotels having a capacity of from one thousand to five thousand people. Some are for transients, some for families and others are bachelor quarters for both sexes, and still others a combination of the two. The aim is to afford variety enough to suit all tastes and requirements, so far as a public establishment can fill the bill. For those to whom none of these accommodations appeal there are always clubs; and after that there are private homes where one or two or more may live as retired as he or she or they may choose. Indeed it is a matter of record that nearly a third of the families prefer to run their own establishments, while the single adults of both sexes and a variety of ages prefer the companionship and gaiety of communal life. And while the old adage about birds of a feather has not lost its force under co-operation, notwithstanding the fact that democracy is actual and complete and no distinctions smacking of caste or privilege are permitted, there is far less friction than might naturally be looked for. It is of course inevitable that a fastidious stickler for etiquette should now and again, to his unutterable horror, find himself sitting at table beside an uncompromising barbarian whose early training had encour-

aged the reprehensible habit of satisfying hunger with a knife instead of the conventional fork, together with other gaucheries of unmistakably plebeian origin; but such instances are comparatively rare owing, on the one hand, to natural selection and, on the other, to the fact that there is in the settlement a school of deportment, most punctiliously patronized by numerous delinquents, where are taught those outward forms that are not improperly regarded as evidence that we have outgrown the cocoanut-throwing stage of our evolutionary advance.

Another feature of the town is its gymnasium. It covers ten acres, has every modern equipment, including tennis and hand-ball courts, swimming tank, running tracks, down to a winter baseball park with glass sides and roof and seats for twenty-five thousand fans and rooters. This is not, however, the only concession to the national game, as there are six more perfectly appointed ball grounds in as many different parts of the city. Indeed in the matter of games and sports young America is catered to as nowhere else in the world. Tennis, cricket, lacrosse, golf, bowling and billiards, a skating rink, dancing pavilion, toboggan slide and many other diversions, both outdoors and in, are liberally provided for the youngsters whose hardy frames and vigorous

health already attest the wisdom of the policy.

There is a grand music pavilion seating forty thousand and a crack-a-jack band of a hundred pieces, conducted by a famous baton-wielder, to furnish the class of music necessary to attract the forty thousand there. There are also five or six more musical aggregations calling themselves brass bands, but until they either disband or learn to play with somewhat greater proficiency the less said about them the better.

Half a dozen theatres devoted to histrionic and operatic art are well patronized by the crowds and one in particular, a vaudeville show recruited from local talent and known as The Ham, hangs out its S. R. O. shingle every night in the week. No joke antedating the Flood is supposed to be perpetrated in this haunt of the muses and graces; but perhaps, after all, the secret of its popularity lies in the fact that every seat in the house is equipped with a patent folding table whereon are served hot or cold, hard or soft drinks, pipes, tobacco and cigars, according to individual fancy. Shocking? Not a bit—not when you get "onto" the Kankakee curves. For while it is a fact that any adult may indulge in an endless assortment of liquid refreshments there is an ironclad and remorseless penalty for those who abuse the privilege. The first exhi-

bition of weakness is followed by a three months' drouth. The second offense condemns the delinquent to the water wagon for six months. The third infraction is penalized by a year's abstention and so on in the same ratio until four years (the maximum penalty) is imposed. Then the erring one starts out with a clean slate and repeats, unless he has meanwhile learned to control his appetite; but it will be readily understood that, granting for argument's sake an entire lack of self-control, the most unfortunate and inveterate drunkard could not thus become an overwhelming nuisance to himself or anybody else since he could over indulge but five times in nearly eight years. This rule was adopted by the community, not to look at, but to be enforced, and up to date it has been enforced. However, there is no disposition to further penalize the victim of appetite by social ostracism or otherwise. It is recognized as a weakness and the unfortunate one is protected against himself. That is all. There are many substitutes for alcohol compounded of harmless chemicals, unfermented fruit juices, etc., of which the blacklisted one is welcome to swallow a barrel, if he can hold so much; but spiritus frumenti is taboo. He knows it and so does everybody in the community.

Minors, moreover, are not allowed to use alcohol beverages or tobacco in any form.

There is another attraction that is probably unique—assuredly on so magnificent a scale of exposition. It is called "Cosmos" and thither of a Sunday night resort thousands of students, dreamers, speculators, philosophers, the idly curious, and all who ever pause in the conventional routine long enough to consider, however lightly and carelessly, the speck in the universe upon which we dwell for a brief space, its relation to the planetary system of which it is a cognate part, its infinitely smaller and less understood relation to the myriads of glittering orbs that flash and wheel world without end—all who ever pause to ask, however flippantly, What are we, and whither do we rush through illimitable ether on the wings of the wind?

The auditorium has a seating capacity of ten thousand. The stage, in an effort to realize the grandeur of the subject, has been constructed two hundred feet wide, four hundred feet deep and one hundred feet high; but these figures give no adequate conception of its possibilities unless one recalls the magic of stagecraft and scene-painting by which on an ordinary little stage the clever application of the rules of perspective has enabled the audience to apparently

look across many miles of rugged mountain scenery, rolling prairie or billowy sea, distance being practically annihilated. Add to this the fact that the cleverest stage carpenters and scenic artists in the world, working under the direction of a famous astronomer, have been in charge of the scenery and stage properties—and the reader may faintly grasp the immensity and possibilities of the scheme.

One night, the lecturer, standing upon a lofty platform and speaking through a megaphone, will thrill his audience with the wonders of our own solar system, each planet of which is faithfully and accurately reproduced, both as to comparative size and motion, diurnal and annual, as it rolls on its endless path around the central luminary—illustrating the phenomena of day and night, the seasons, the laws of attraction and gravity, the play of force upon matter—explaining the physical and other characteristics of our lunar satellites, her actions upon the tides, and why her soft refulgence falls upon the earth always from the same side of her cold and barren surface whereon the volcanic upheavals of remote ages have left their fantastic panorama of mountain, plain and valley.

Another night, his lecture, graphically illustrated by colored electric lights and all the real-

istic accessories of our inventive age, will carry the imagination back to the very birth of our planet, according to the generally accepted theory of the nebular hypothesis. The awe-stricken multitudes behold the planet on fire, flames leaping high in air, bursting rocks falling into boiling seas, volcanoes hurling their debris from molten, spouting craters; yet the whole mass obeys the law of gravitation in its flaming track through space. . . . . The lights go out. . . . . A million years elapse. . . . . The world is the same—and yet how changed! Although the equatorial regions are still hissing hot, the mass has cooled, shrunken, solidified. Around the poles the vegetation grows rankly toward the clouds of mist and steam that enwrap the globe. The external heat is subsiding —the crust is cooling—but away from the poles volcanoes still belch and spit their molten torrents unceasingly. . . . . And so on, down through the various geological periods. . . . . until, cycling calmly on her way, appears the planet of today—snow-capped mountains, rivers, forests, plains, vast cities, railway systems, rolling seas dotted with craft flying the flags of all nations.

Again the splendors of the heavens in all their glorious majesty—the milky way, the giant con-

stellations, the countless groups and systems, the dead and active suns, their satellites and stellar coryphees—are thrown upon the screen before the wondering crowds in the gorgeous colors which the spectroscope has revealed to those whose lives are passed in contemplation of the starry spaces.

In all there are twenty lectures, each having its appropriate setting, but more are in preparation; and if the inhabitants of Kankakee, old and young alike, do not presently absorb more evolutionary and planetary science than they ever before dreamed of it is certainly their own fault. Nothing more inspiring and practical than these entertainments is conceivable. As the lecturer stands on his platform high above the auditorium, his sonorous tones floating down through the megaphone, a subtle spell, a fascination almost mesmeric, a sense of the vastness, harmony and beauty of the universe, obsess the most indifferent; and the impression does not readily fade.

Other public buildings are the postoffice, library, art museum, university of languages and classics, a technical institute and a dozen more elementary, preparatory and manual training schools, all accommodating many thousand students. There is also a large and perfectly ap-

pointed hospital, but its usefulness is mostly confined to looking ornamental as sickness is rare and no accidents of unusual importance have as yet marred the even tenor of life in the plantation.

Two classes of public buildings are conspicuous by their absence. There are no jails in town and the stranger would vainly hunt for the familiar church spire. For the former no provision is made, the consensus of opinion being that if a person cannot live in Kankakee and restrain any violently vicious and criminal tendencies, inherited or acquired, his proper place is with the penal colony, a desolate island in the South Seas where a few score incorrigibles already reside—that is, if they haven't killed each other off like the Kilkenny cats, a consummation which would probably not to any great extent convulse the existing social order. As for churches, there is nothing in the city charter or the constitution to prevent the construction and maintenance of any number of them. Up to date, however, no society, or the nucleus of such society, has proposed plans and specifications for the erection of any edifice consecrated to theology. As a matter of fact it is strongly suspected that the worship of an intangible and more or less hypothetical and problematical

deity will not be anything like as popular as it was when there was more to be gained by it, when a premium, so to speak, was put upon outwardly conforming to a modified paganism because it was popular and upon performing, from motives of policy, numerous other intellectual stunts.

In regard to private residences there are at present some four thousand charming villas and cottages erected and occupied by families and small clubs or groups of workers to whom hotel and community life is wholly or partially distasteful. And new building permits are constantly being granted. The widest latitude of choice prevails and everybody is expected, even encouraged, to select the environment best suited to his temperamental and other peculiarities.

All buildings, public, private, of whatever nature and purpose, are considered practically fireproof. Their exterior construction is pressed and glazed brick, glass, stone, reinforced concrete, or a handsome, patent adobe—all on a steel framework—while the interiors are finished in natural woods, hard and soft, sheet steel, pressed and stamped, beautiful stucco clays in natural tints, etc. The central plant furnishes heat, light and fuel to every house and, as if this were not sufficiently paternalistic on the part of the city

fathers, every living and sleeping room in town is amply provided with cold-storage pipes for artificially reducing in summer temperatures unduly ambitious to climb their highest.

In fact, Kankakee, the first new town under co-operation to even approximately approach completion, is easily the premier city of the world whether considered for architectural beauty, sanitation, comfort or any other desirable characteristic. None but the human animal, flying things excepted, is allowed upon the truly magnificent thoroughfares—horses, dogs, cats and other animal pets being banished elsewhere. Its sewer system is simply perfection; garbage and all useless waste matter is cremated daily in a plant outside the city; all electric wires, telegraph and telephone lines, and service pipes of whatever nature and intent are buried in their own separate conduits which are of a size sufficient to enable workmen to walk upright and make repairs or install additional service; and no car track disfigures its streets, an abundance of automobiles furnishing transportation to the city limits where electric roads branch off to every part of the plantation.

Such in brief is Kankakee, the town, but of the 256,000-acre plantation whose workers the town was built to shelter in comfort, lack of

space forbids an adequate summary even. Wheat and corn, barley, oats and rye are its staple crops; but many thousand acres are also devoted to orchards, small fruits and truck gardening. The crowds are carried to and from work by rapid electric roads; steam or electrically driven machinery is used wherever it can be to advantage and thousands of horses and mules are quartered in commodious barns scattered over the plantation where are also the tool and implement sheds. The harvest this fall is a bountiful one. It will be the same next fall and every other fall, because the comrades trust neither in God nor luck nor soothsayers nor amulets nor other charms to ward off pestilence, famine, drouth or insect enemies. The drouth they provide against by an adequate irrigation system. The other contingencies are met and overcome by scientific methods, unceasing vigilance and hard work—the latter being so divided among the thousands of toilers, however, that it is a pleasure rather than a burden.

CHAPTER X.

Work, that fantastic mythological curse popularly imagined to have issued by divine injunction against the race when the world was young, seems to have lost its stigma now that it has been dissociated from caste—now that the toiler has no longer to work for a "dead horse" or divide up with the drones of society at the good old populistic ratio of sixteen to one, the drone appropriating sixteen parts to labor's one. So far from being the curse tradition has painted it labor, relieved of the odium of supporting upon its breaking back the Atlas of profit, rent and interest, becomes the only panacea for mental and physical unrest, the vade mecum of the blasé, the legitimate outlet for the constructive energy of the genus. Properly divorced from its monotony by a corresponding season of relaxation it is at once the inspiration and excuse, the sinē qua non of rational existence upon the planet. And as in bygone days it was the chief end of life to escape it, so now, the curse having been exorcised by the co-operative principle, labor becomes the natural and inevitable expression of

happiness, ambition and altruism, the physical channel by which the ideology of enfranchisement attains its realization.

Yet, while the thought of labor awakens dread in none, twentieth century ambition, evolving vast schemes of national aggrandizement, impatient for the consummation of its ideals, turns to invention as parched fields turn to rain.

For instance, in view of the many million miles of practically indestructible highways required by the new commonwealth, it was evident that former methods of road-building would prove insufferably tedious. So the mechanical experts invented a machine calculated to relieve the situation. More accurately, it was a set of road machines, consisting of a 150,000 horse-power grader, a 75,000 horse-power distributor which followed the grader and distributed the crushed stone and concrete filling and a 150-ton roller. This combination, supplemented by crushers of greatly enhanced power and a new automatic concrete mixer, enabled the "highwaymen" to build more superior roads in a day than twice the number of workers used to construct in a month.

This grader is also useful for railroad work since with irresistible force it scoops out cuts and fills depressions, automatically throwing the

dirt ahead of its powerful shovels or depositing the displaced material to the rear or to one side, at the will of the operator.

And the new railroads resemble even the best of the old ones much the same as the latter resembled the early efforts of the late Mr. Stephenson in the field of steam traction. The only extensive piece of road thus far complete and in running order is the eastern section of transcontinental highway between New York and Chicago. Straight as a chalk line almost every foot of the way, this new four-track line is a marvel of engineering when compared with any previous attempt of the sort. It is not only straight; it is level as a ballroom floor the whole thousand miles. This is the design of the roadbed: a solid rock-ballasted foundation, leveled up with concrete; on this are laid steel cross-ties, and bolted to the ties are steel rails of enormous weight; after which, allowing due space for the flanges of the car wheels, the whole is buried in Portland cement. Two tracks are for passenger and mail trains which easily cover the distance in five hours, electricity being the motive power, and the other two are for fast freight of perishable nature, live stock, etc.

Having completed the road a third of the way across the continent, the construction

"gang" is pausing only to take a long breath. By Christmas it expects to reach the foothills of the Rockies and thereafter progress will be comparatively slow, but incomparably rapid, nevertheless, when contrasted with previously existing methods of tunneling mountains. As an indication, at least, of the optimism which pervades the engineer corps the following extract (taken from Chief Engineer Leffingwell's recent address before the Chicago Society of Mechanical Arts) is appended:

"We are really doing things. * * * The masses, released from the economic slavery of competition, are devoting their energies to improvement of the planet on a scale hitherto impossible because of an absurd superstition that our material, social and industrial advancement depended upon how much of a certain tawny metal we could discover and appropriate from Nature's laboratory. A very brilliant idea, that —but happily we have now so far outgrown it that not one in a thousand of those who most profited by the economic delusion would at present defend its perpetuation. It is true that in the past certain epochs of history have been characterized by achievements of surpassing beauty, utility or grandeur—such as the magnificent cities, temples and pyramidal mauso-

leums of ancient Egypt; the time-defying architecture of the Greece of long ago; the imperishable monuments of the Roman empire—its viaducts, art treasures and storied piles—even the long forgotten Aztecs of our own hemisphere built a chain of mountain roads that the intervening centuries have left practically unimpaired. But these are reminders of what might have been rather than, as many have supposed, typical of a civilization that marked the apex of man's ambitious performance, architecturally and æsthetically considered. Out of the sweat and blood and groans of countless wretched slaves the chef d'œuvres of antiquity have been wrought. Every sculptured pillar, every classic column, every carved entablature, every arching dome, every capital, every stone—has been laid under the taskmaster's cruel lash by the victims of fire and sword and conquest. Their gorgeous temples and palaces looming in the foreground have served to hide, but not obliterate, the squalid huts of poverty and despair that filled the background thick as autumn leaves. Founded in rapine, carnage, spoliation, exploitation, murder, lust and tyranny, their civilizations went down in blood and fire; and today the desert sands are blowing over many of their proudest monuments of a glory that has passed away.

"But we—we will turn down the blood-red page of history and begin anew. We will profit by their failure—else were history vain. Their evanescent glory was the glory of one-man rule, the exaltation of tyranny and the abasement of the multitudes. For every masterpiece of art that despotism has bequeathed to the world the co-operative commonwealth will complete and leave to posterity a million. Where tyranny has beautified the earth in spots co-operation will cover the planet with loveliness. Where they have left us one enduring highway we will girdle the globe with highways and bands of steel, over the land and under the sea until—who can say?—the time may come within our own generation when the sensation-seeking traveller can leave New York in the morning and be back at the same hour the next morning, having in the meantime completed the circuit of the globe—to the everlasting disquietude of poor little Puck who will begin to wonder how long it will take him to become a back number. Utopian? Hardly; we are already running experimental trains on a special track at the rate of a thousand miles an hour and such a speed will in the not very distant future be maintained between New York and San Francisco. But if we can make such time between these cities, why may we not eventually encircle the earth at the same rapid pace?

"But this recalls me to my mutton—what I came here to tell you about tonight is our herculean task of tunneling the Rockies at their base and the truly marvelous machinery with which we expect to accomplish it. My assistant will now throw upon the screen a biographic likeness, showing the giant machine attacking a solid ledge." . . . . . The rest of the professor's scientific and entertaining lecture need not here be reproduced since, unaccompanied by the illustrations, much of its force would be lost. In substance it set forth the difficulties to be encountered in tunneling the three hundred and fifty miles of the Great Divide and the mountains beyond at a level in no case exceeding by more than 3,500 feet that of the sea itself; and, while he did not wish to go on record as a prophet, the lecturer intimated that through trains would probably be running within five years or less.

And—to further illustrate the "dead and dreary level" to which Socialism was erstwhile and popularly supposed to directly lead, crucifying incentive and paralyzing initiative—the hopelessly commonplace people are already arguing, one to another, that if one can stretch a small string (a telegraphic cable for example) between two hemispheres it is not beyond all peradventure that a somewhat larger string might be substituted

with correspondingly gratifying results; or, to state it more practically, if not more concretely, they are looking forward to the day when a series of wrought iron and steel tubes, stretched from continent to continent and supported where necessary by pillars of masonry built up from the floor of the sea, shall span the mighty oceans and function as a medium for transporting with inconceivable rapidity a cosmopolitan earth-race from antipodes to antipodes, and back again, at their royal democratic pleasure.

Beg pardon!—did somebody remark that if the earth-race had nothing under the sun to do but enjoy itself promiscuously and haphazardly it wouldn't be at all necessary to go about it with such an everlasting rush? The gentleman is reminded that surplus energy, like murder, will out. If it be deflected from dollar-chasing it will necessarily pursue a loftier ideal since it could not well find a more debasing one.

In a thousand ways the energy of a free people is manifesting itself. The question of mere physical sustenance is met by the bountiful harvest of agricultural and horticultural fruits of orchard, field and vineyard which, under the supervision of experts, has filled to bursting the national granaries and storehouses. Once freed from the economic heresy which paradoxically

postulated that the more foodstuffs and other stuffs a country shipped to other countries the more prosperous were the shippers, the problem of existence becomes vastly simplified, and life has few of the drawbacks and winter none of the terrors inseparable from the "competitive swim" in which the average swimmer breasted a current that carried him down stream two feet while he was gaining one. Existence having thus grown wondrously kind, the next problems were those of transportation and communication. They are a necessity of modern life. That they should be installed on a scale commensurate with modern requirements is as natural as that, under private ownership, they should have been maintained as death-traps and dividend-producers.

In the matter of national parks and landscape gardening at points where Nature has been prodigal of her scenic charms the most riotous and altruistic imagination could scarcely conjure more entrancing artificial loveliness than has been planned throughout the commonwealth, from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon; from Savannah, Georgia, to San Diego, California.

Of all the innovations growing out of the change of government none is more striking than has taken place in the domain of manufacture. Cheapness, substitution, shoddy, veneer,

adulteration, inferiority (whether of material or workmanship) are unknown. Everything is made to use instead of to sell and the artisan who should through carelessness allow his product to fall short of the best in his particular line would soon be transferred to a more congenial task since it is held that none is properly employed whose occupation is not a jealous mistress, demanding and receiving the best that in him lies. It is also held that out of the diversity of occupations presented for individual choice everyone of normal disposition and instincts can select his metier. For the abnormal and defective, if not of criminal tendencies, the utmost allowance is made. They are recognized as the product of an environment that was itself defective, and their protection is regarded as the duty of the society which was responsible for their presence.

The fascinating science of aerostatics is also receiving no inconsiderable attention. As long as the earth-race shall exist, as long as the distant planets shall flash and glow in space, presenting their ancient riddle, man's bold dream of finally compelling their secrets will never cease to thrill and urge him on. It may be that he is foredoomed to failure. It may be that Nature, in her immutable and unfathomable scheme, has

written her "thus far" just without the pale of mortal ken; but daring minds will none the less aspire and the ingenuity of the genius, undismayed by any number of defeats, will continue to exhaust the range of possibilities in the absorbing quest. That many planetary bodies besides our own are inhabited by intelligent beings is with most scientists a foregone conclusion. To establish communication with these universals, personal or even by signal, is so superlatively desirable that nothing of human interest, except our own survival and propagation, is at all comparable. The last word about refraction has not yet been said and the spectroscope offers almost illimitable possibilities. The hopes of astronomers are even now centring on a new telescope whose power is promised to far exceed any optical instrument of the kind heretofore in use. Its extraordinary lens, the invention of a professor in Marx university, while not new in principle, is nevertheless an innovation in the application of well-understood principles. It will be mounted in southern California where the dry and cloudless summers present particularly favorable opportunities for observing the heavens. It is calculated that under the most auspicious atmospheric conditions this instrument will bring the moon within a few miles of the earth. It

may be that in course of time, even if we cannot overcome the difficulties in the way in interplanetary navigation, we shall be able to bring some at least of the planets down to us through the magic of optical science.

Not only in the above specified instances but in a million unspecified ways does the populace refute the oft-repeated argument that Socialism would destroy incentive, ambition and individual initiative. In point of fact there can be no surpassing amount of either energy or ambition to destroy, in a people willing to put up with the hollow mockery of existence under capitalism any longer than is absolutely necessary. That a movement which was as much an intellectual as an economic one (the desire to be free is one of the main postulates of freedom) should have been accomplished by force—minority force at that—was certainly against it. Its signal success simply proves that the winter of popular discontent was slowly smouldering under the ashes of a deceptive indifference, ready to burst into the glorious summer of revolt at the first favorable opportunity. But all's well that ends well; and as the first six months of co-operation pass into history, rounded out by abundant harvests, good will and fraternity everywhere: all is quiet along the Potomac and elsewhere, up

and down the limits of the commonwealth. Wars and rumors of war, seem already to have faded from the minds of men. Rolling in plenty, secure in the conviction that exploitation of man by man is at an end, no horribly grinning nightmare of poverty and want disturbs the race as it sleeps on the bosom of old Mother Earth while she rushes on her immemorial way around the sun. Without lock or bolt or bar it sleeps; for with the passing of the system which suckled it as the lioness her whelps, crime, too, passed away. Or nearly so. The only crimes are those of sex. The hates, the loves, the burning jealousies, the heartaches, the despairing throes of those who adore and are scorned, of those who licentiously covet, of those who are fickle and of those in whom the animal predominates, cannot all at once be regulated by legislative enactment, by the dictates of reason, or by the mere substitution of governmental order for governmental anarchy. These passions are elemental and are, in greater or lesser degree, characteristic of the entire race. When abnormally developed they will, like any other abnormality, operate as intermittently disturbing forces. With the general adoption of a more scientific dietary which shall largely exclude "hot and rebellious" liquors, animal flesh, the wilderness of drugs, mineral

salts, condiments and powerful acids with which we are only too prone to handicap our long-suffering internal economy, we may in course of time emulate our humble quadrupedal and bipedal friends, the lower animals, whose instincts in the matter of sex-control seem a far more admirable guide than our reasoning faculties. It is only fair, however, neither in derogation of our above-mentioned humble friends, nor yet in extenuation of our own shortcomings, to acknowledge that with equal temptation they might have fallen almost as deeply into the mire as we are imbedded in the mud. It is their good fortune that they cannot imitate our truly vicious dietary, not to mention other irrationalities. Otherwise it is highly probable that more animal homes would be broken up than ever Socialism was by its enemies accused of trying to disrupt.

Under the co-operative commonwealth the mothers of the nation are accorded a status of absolute equality, socially and politically, with their husbands and brothers. Monogamy is, of course, the ruling custom. Polygamy is not only a violation of natural law and in contravention of sex-freedom; it is the invention of tyrants to recruit their armies. Hedged about with the mystic clap-trap of religious rites it speedily develops into a cult the inevitable result of whose

ascendency is still further to enslave and degrade woman. Under conditions even approximating equality of the sexes it has no earthly show of establishing a foothold. As long as the race shall endure and the green earth rotate there will be broken vows, inconstant lovers and more or less promiscuity of the sexes. But these derelictions are not necessarily criminal—they may or they may not lead to crime. One thing is sure: the commerce of the sexes (commerce is most appropriately descriptive of sex-relations under the capitalistic regime) can never again descend to the huckstering level typical of the bargain-counter days when women openly sold themselves for gold or titles, flaunted their charms in the market-place to be snapped up by the highest bidder, or were compelled to eke out starvation wages by a traffic as loathsome to them as it was economically necessary. Henceforth the sexes will mate under the law of mutual attraction and that alone is a guarantee that the earth will be peopled with a superior race.

Laws there are and will continue to be; but the people, having had a surfeit of law and lawyers, will in this respect consider paucity preferable to redundancy. What few laws shall from time to time be found necessary will be

made in the interest of and approved by a substantial majority of the people, who may at any time rescind, revise or expunge inefficient laws, as well as enact new ones. Being enacted for the welfare and preservation of the masses instead of as a club to be used by the classes, there will be few loopholes and still fewer instances of double entendre, tergiversation, circumlocution, ambiguity or unnecessary prolixity, and any schoolboy of average mentality will be able to understand them. Therefore, no professional interpreters will be required. But in any case these cannot thrive outside an atmosphere of graft. And graft is sleeping in the valley where the gentle zephyrs play.

And while such are a few of the results achieved in the United States the economic and revolutionary changes elsewhere in the world are scarcely less radical. Canada has politely, yet vigorously withal, declined to be longer worked by the ruling "clawses" and is out in the open, flying the colors and voicing the hopes of international democracy.

Mexico has held the sack for Senor Special Privilege as long as she cares to; and in the nest of warring republics further south one more revolution didn't count, anyway, so the long exploited peons, pueblos and vulgos threw it in

for good measure, and at last accounts the capitalistic puercos were making for the underbrush with the surrounding atmosphere full of machetes and banderillas.

Across the Atlantic the several states of continental Europe are in their own way realizing the benefits of the co-operative principle. Petty jealousies and racial and religious differences are thrust as far into the background as could reasonably be expected; but the transition from divine-right rule to democracy is too recent to even consider the advisability of suddenly obliterating those artificial and superfluous boundaries which have stimulated a "patriotism" as real as it was disastrous. Time alone can soften the asperities born of fratricidal struggle, heal the bitterness and heartache engendered in those whose territory has been conquered by the sword, exorcise the rankling fires of animosity cunningly kindled and fanned to flame in days gone by by those whose interest it was to sidetrack unanimous proletarian action by dividing the workers and setting them at one another's throats. But the proletariat is rapidly learning to estimate at their true value those tricks of the foxy masters—complete unanimity is in sight.

In Asia, too, a wonderful transformation has taken place. The economic shift of twentieth

century financiers from the gold standard to the renunciation of any old standard, so far as concerns the minting or printing of money, is reflected in the frantic efforts of hereditary and divine-right potentates to discover where, if anywhere, they stand—whether they are afoot or on horseback. That their thrones are rapidly becoming a doubtful and precarious asset for the purpose of further exploiting the already awakening millions of the continent that was young and vigorous, that reached its spectacular prime and grew old and went to sleep before Europe had even ruffled the page of history: is a fact sufficiently patent to cause a drop in the price of throne-lumber.

Turkey is in the seething cauldron of unrest, browned to a turn on one side by the fastidious chefs of the social democracy who hopefully declare their intention of cooking the other side while the cranberry sauce is stewing on the hob. That they are roasting the bird in its own blood is only an illustration of the way they do things over there. It is a style affected by the royal patrons of the dish rather than a favorite recipe of the much-exploited chefs.

And India—unhappy India!—groveling in the dust so long that she had forgotten initiative, forgotten pride, forgotten all but the sup-

pliant's plaintive whine; cursed by a philosophy that is the apotheosis of fatuity and the personification of despair; kicked and cuffed into submission by an alien army of beef-eating swashbucklers and starved to a skeleton that an alien master, intensely hated and just as intensely feared, might riot in shameless superabundance; the legitimate prey of imperialism, destiny and a faking priesthood—even she, the discredited outcast among all the nations of the earth, is taking heart of hope. Where grows the honeysuckle there sips the bee—or words to that effect—and, conversely, where there is no honey to be extracted the swaggering mercenaries of imperialism do not linger long. The golden and mellifluous stream of graft is shut off at the main spigot and imperialism itself is, to use a metaphor more expressive than elegant, too dead to skin. From all of which it is not unreasonable, perhaps, to prophesy the dawn of a brighter day for les miserables of the Orient, the non-resisting, patient fatalists who yet contain within the national character the faintly burning, but inextinguishable, fires of a genius as pyrotechnic as ever flashed across the page of history.

Perhaps of them all Japan was the hardest hit. To say that she was "up in the air" is a

mild statement of the rage, disappointment and perplexity that strove for adequate expression. To be awakened out of the sleep of ages and told to get into the game as played so skillfully by the overlords of the Occidental civilization, a civilization which had long ago left the Flowery Kingdomites standing still at the quarter pole; to learn the game and get into the race and run like a greyhound, forging ahead with a meteoric burst of speed that made her Occidental rivals get busy with quirt and spur—and then to be informed that the game was passé and the race declared off! was a condition of things as an offset to which all the theorizing in the world had a pale and bilious complexion. In other words, if so soon her ambitious dreams were to be done for, what the —— were they begun for? It is more difficult for her to unlearn than it was for her to assimilate her lesson in strenuosity. But she's coming on—nobody can accuse the little brown men of being unduly dense—and soon special privilege and exploitation will be as discredited over there as they are in other parts of the world. . . . . The foregoing briefly indicates the status quo; and while international co-operation is being joyously acclaimed from sea to sea, from pole to pole, the wires are car-

rying abroad the news of the presidential election in the Co-operative Commonwealth of America. In spite of his desire to retire from public office, President Tempest has succeeded himself. His plea that, having aided to the best of his ability the world-wide and successful proletarian revolution, he was entitled to a rest from the cares and responsibilities of public life was met by a whirlwind of clamorous protest on the part of millions of the contrary-minded, supplemented by an avalanche of ballots that buried his good intentions a mile deep.

"For an old wire-puller like me," said President Bill to Mercereau, commenting on the election, "I certainly put my foot in it."

"How do you make that out?" inquired his brother-in-law.

"I wasn't foxy enough," replied the president. "Being truly anxious to get out of office, I should have pretended to be crazy for the nomination—that would have let me out, all right."

"Don't you fool yourself," replied the other, "if they think you want it they'll keep you at the helm for the rest of your natural life. That's what it is to be a popular idol."

"Your think-tank has gone wrong," declared President Bill with conviction.

CHAPTER XI.

The following extracts are quoted from the "Friday Afternoon" lecture delivered before the pupils of the high schools of the commonwealth by Prof. Manton, being one of the series of week-end talks by eminent educators, philosophers and scientists who collaborate with the board of education. It is not contended that there is anything new or original in subject-matter or method of presentation. The only novelty lies in the fact that under the old regime the mentors, sponsors and guardians of youth, in respect to the intellectual pabulum dosed out to the rising generation, were apparently vastly more concerned with propagating the exploded and discredited theories and myths of a bygone age than they were with keeping their pupils abreast of the latest investigations, researches and deductions of geologists, philosophers, astronomers and other geniuses in scientific and intellectual fields of inquiry; whereas those now charged with the same responsibility venerate nothing because it is hoary with antiquity, but endeavor rather

to encourage a spirit of truth-seeking, regardless of whither it leads and what pet theory may be corroborated and sustained, or, on the other hand, overthrown.

Among other things the professor said: "While all scientists do not agree upon every conceivable topic coming within the range of their investigations, such differences of opinion are mostly and more particularly confined to the purely speculative regions of intellectual activity and are, in that respect of course, unscientific—at least they are without authority.

"Not the least interesting of these speculative doctrines is that of the Nebular Hypothesis, so called. Many eminent scientists have endorsed the theory that matter existed at first in the gaseous state; that through the combined action of inherent force and energy (the one attracting and binding in accordance with the laws of gravitation, cohesion and affinity, the other tending to separate and drive asunder the rotating mass) the gaseous state was superseded by liquefaction; which, in turn, was succeeded by the solid state of the planets as we know them. Exhaustive, ingenious and learned are the arguments adduced to substantiate this theory; but just as we, perhaps, have decided to accept the reasoning, to pin our faith to the

apparently unassailable logic, lo! appears another set of dialecticians whose clever ratiocinations are so many destructive broadsides directed against the very hypothesis we had considered well nigh impregnable. We are confused by so much conflicting erudition. Perhaps we waver and finally end by doubting. But whether we accept the one and reject the other theory, or whether we remain in doubt as to either or reject both, it all amounts to the same thing in the end. Nothing has been demonstrated absolutely, except the fact that unusually clever antagonists have measured intellects in an endeavor to prove that which is not, and may never be, capable of demonstration. They are, to a certain extent, at least, speculators beyond the boundaries of present knowledge and methods of research.

"However, these desiderata are not vital to the race. If we cannot exactly know how the earth was formed from matter, ponderable or imponderable, when it was so formed, and its particular original constitituent properties, we can at any rate analyze the planet as we find it, trace its life-history, as written in and upon its rocky crust, and elaborate a practically accurate theory in respect to the evolution of animal and vegetable life. This has already been accom-

plished, its record is unimpeachable and scientists are in accord.

"It is recognized that the globe upon which we live is a mere accident of that cosmic force and energy which never tire and never sleep and whose continual kinetic play and interplay upon the molecular, atomic and nebulous masses composing the universe are responsible for the birth, continuation and final death of planetary systems. All is change—ceaseless and endless. That we do not better comprehend is due to the circumstance that man's life is but a second of time, his recorded history but a day, out of the vast cycles of the past. What our planet is today it was not yesterday; and tomorrow it will be different still. Even the central sun himself, light and life of our little world, will in the lapse of ages dissipate his enormous heat into the boundless fields of space and shine no more for the earth-race if, indeed, any of earth be left to note his passing.

"The age of the world is variously estimated all the way from fifty millions to three hundred millions of years. Qu'importe? Why should we trouble ourselves? What we know is that it was once a fiery body like the sun, shining by its own light as does that luminary now, and that in those days life did not exist; that the

azoic period, in the course of ages during which the crust of the earth cooled and hardened through dissipation of its intense heat into the surrounding medium and aided by torrential rains, which deluged the earth and formed the seas, gave place to the eozoic, or earliest forms of plant and vegetable life; that plant-life, in the course of other ages, was succeeded by protozoic life and that from this humble beginning, in ever-ascending scale and ever-increasing complexity, life has evolved, has perpetuated its kind in the ceasless struggle for existence until at length was perfected the highest type of all—that of the genus homo.

"And as the birth of our planet is shrouded in impenetrable mystery, both as to time and manner, the precise epoch in which man evolved from the lower brute orders into a thinking, reasoning being with some crude method of communicating with his fellows is no less baffling to science. But that, likewise, is not of preponderating importance. That he so evolved in some far-back time we know. That he slowly ripened in wisdom and in knowledge from age to age, always progressing, learning from experience and holding what he had thus gained, struggling continually with the elements, with the brutes of lower species

and with his own warring species, to maintain his precarious footing upon the inhospitable crust of the planet—is also sufficiently understood.

"Yet if his development was slow during the early centuries of the evolutionary period his advance in modern times has been correspondingly rapid and spectacular. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A. D., as we now reckon time for want of a more satisfactory chronology, were especially prolific of inventions, innovations, discoveries in the domain of science, the more general diffusion of knowledge among the masses, the growing liberality of governments and the thousand-and-one devices for utility and comfort which, indispensable as they are to us, were undreamed of by our early ancestors. The latter half of the nineteenth century was particularly productive of far-reaching results in mechanical, industrial and intellectual fields of progress. This was pre-eminently the age of the public schools, the perfected printing press, the type-setting machine, the telegraph, the telephone and the construction of rapid transportation systems, all of untold value in the dissemination of ideas, the obliteration of caste and the spreading of democracy among the hitherto illiterate, apathetic and ex-

ploited proletariat. This, too, was the age of Darwin, Marx, and many other pioneers whose philosophic genus enriched and revolutionized the world.

"This fin-de-siecle period, so enormously rich in genius, philosophy and invention, had its dark side, too. Never was morality at so low an ebb; never was honor so cheap, justice so purchasable, courts so venal; never were legislatures so corrupt nor politicians so brazen, so clamorous and so infatuated with and tenacious of office; never were contrasts so glaring—the rich so bulging with wealth, the poor so poverty-stricken and wretched; never was the almighty dollar so worshipped, greed so greedy, the struggle for existence so intense, graft so open, rampant and wide-spread, and never was human life held so cheap, notwithstanding the wilderness of hypocritical protestation to the contrary. It was the era when diplomacy reached its high-water mark, so to speak. Under the specious and mellifluous title of 'benevolent assimilation' the weaker nations were relentlessly plundered and exploited by the stronger. Furthermore, in order to take some of the bitter sting out of death on the battlefield, screamingly funny 'peace' congresses met every now and then to devise more 'humane'

methods of human slaughter. These emasculated dilettanti considered perfectly shocking the use of dum-dum bullets; but the fortunate proletarian conscript who met his death through the beneficent impact of a nice, clean Mauser bullet was by these unimpeachable authorities on militarism in general and benevolent assimilation in particular supposed to die with a beatific smile upon his lips. It was a time of phrase-mongering, tergiversation, euphonious terminology, a truckling to wealth and power unparalleled. In short, the age was a perfectly anomalous combination of altruism and militarism, of beneficence and bedlam, of professional butchers bawling for peace and instigating war, of christendom mouthing the Golden Rule and building bigger battleships—a hodge-podge of contradictions without rhyme or reason.

"Of the far-off time that cradled the infant race no record has come down to tell the absorbing story of man's upward march. Of the world he was destined to measure, to girdle and to conquer he had no conception. He lived in tree-tops and in caves and gibbered his hates and loves and fears in uncouth gutterals and falsetto cries scarcely more intelligible than those of apes today. The lightnings that

flashed across the stormclouds, the reverberating peals of thunder, the seismic shocks that cleft and shook the solid crust, were so many demons of the earth and air, to be appeased if possible. Thus quite naturally arose a demand for the medicine-men, the sooth-sayers, fakirs and priests, who cunningly pretended to mediate between unseen, but wrathful and terrifying, spirits and the objects of their wrath. Hence, too, the more modern systems of mythology, theology, theosophy, spiritualism and the numerous cults, philosophies and psycho-isms from Pythagoras, and even long before the time of that worthy reincarnationist and transmigrationist, down to Mothereddyism, Dowieism and the disciples of the New Thought (whatever that is or was or may be) whose elaborate and cocksure directions for getting 'into tune with the Infinite' were the wooziest ever.

"It has taken a long time to divorce the race from its belief in the supernatural, and even now there are sporadic outbursts of superstition, atavistic manifestations and reversions to long-exploded barbarisms, including some brand-new formulas for enslaving the mind. The genus has indeed been wedded to its gods; but final separation is in sight—without alimony.

"As old as the race, and corresponding at any given period to the intellectual status of the worshippers, have been the gods of the different peoples, tribes and nations. The ancient Egyptians worshipped fabulous animals, half human and half brute, and mummified their dead; the Chinese invested the grave with elaborate ceremonials and sacrificed the living to the 'spirits' of their departed ones; the Buddhists worshipped images and relics of their translated gods and slaughtered the living to propitiate the divine wrath or that of their deputies of wood and stone; the Mohammedans were even more fanatical in their religious rites, and the ancient Greeks and Romans were scarcely less heathenish, being polytheists, iconolaters, and given to barbarous sacrificial customs.

"On the heels of these and numerous other animistic cults, if anything so freakish may be dignified by the name, came the Christian religion. So far was it from offering anything new in the line of superstition that it was a plain, ordinary daylight steal out of whole cloth. Its cosmogony was filched bodily from far more ancient writings. Its Adam and Eve were the Adami and Heva of still more primitive Oriental brainstormers. Even in its long-distance

drop from polytheism to the fabulous Trinity, which consisted of a father, a son and a most preposterous Holy Ghost to sin against whom or which was accounted the quintessence of all abominations (if anybody ever did thus offend he probably slept just as soundly since nobody by searching was ever able to discover what it was) Christianity was guilty of plagiaristic kleptomania or kleptomaniacal plagiarism—if either or both phrases fracture all the rules of tautology it's the best I can do—for its precious Three-in-one was nothing more or less than the Trimurti of Hindu sponsorship—that three-headed abnormality of the Vedas. The miraculous Christ himself was undoubtedly a steal from some older religion—his personality is in many respects not so dissimilar to those Buddhistic deities who at irregular intervals are supposed to reappear on earth and, having accomplished their highly beneficent mission, to take a walk into Nirvana until a mundane crisis once again demands a personally conducted tour of inspection.

"Even its far-famed Golden Rule was a pitiful fiasco in the line of originality, for Confucius, centuries earlier, had uttered not merely the sentiment, but almost the exact words. However, in view of the fact that it was all pur-

loined one more little inadvertent sequestration of a Chinaman's Golden Rule might be overlooked if that were all that was the matter with it. Far more serious than the manner of its incorporation was the crass stupidity and puerility of its 'divine' propagandist whose introduction of its precepts into a competitive society was tantamount to his expecting that water could overcome the law of gravity and run uphill. Therein lay the essential weakness of the scheme—a weakness perfectly comprehensible and excusable from the standpoint that he was a fallible and erring mortal like ourselves who assimilate our lessons slowly in the rugged school of experience; but wholly indefensible from the standpoint of superior and godlike wisdom. For the Golden Rule, however admirable its sentiment may be conceded, could never for a moment be squared with the unremitting struggle for existence under competition, a struggle in which only the strongest, fittest and craftiest had a chance of survival. That its putatively divine sponsor left untouched and unrebuked the only system of government that forever debarred the realization of its beneficent philosophy was to throw it into the category of those costly, often ghastly, divine jokes of which in the past humanity has had such a surfeit.

"But, after all has been said, it is perfectly apparent that humanity has no need of divine and omnipotent rulers who fail to rule, of unknown and incomprehensible spiritual overseers who do not oversee, of fanciful theologies that could never, by any stretch of the imagination, form a logical connecting link between human conduct and life in a future state, even if the wholly untenable assumption of a future existence be conceded: since conduct is of relative significance only; what is considered proper in one historical epoch being in a different period regarded as highly improper, not to mention the wide variance of contemporaneous authorities and standards.

"It was many years ago that Prof. Tyndall announced that he recognized in Matter the possibility and potency of all that had been, all that was, and the promise of all that was to be. Although at the time his argument was fiercely assailed by press and pulpit, by scientists and laymen alike, the flitting years have added their weight of confirmatory testimony until, leaving scientists out of the question, he would be a rash layman who would dispute the soundness of Prof. Tyndall's conclusions.

"In the humble origin of the species, in the long and upward climb from protoplasm to civ-

ilized man, in the strenuous, endless struggle for survival involving the sacrifice of untold billions of lives, in the rough, necessitous by-ways of experience where men have groped for knowledge, in the costly mistakes, in the caprice, blindness and utter cruelty of the plan—the scientific instinct would search in vain for evidence of a beneficent and guiding providence. . . . . But negative proof is sometimes scarcely better than no proof. Let us get after the kernel within the husk. At the outermost bounds of scientific investigation, where the savant 'translates his ignorance into Greek and calls it agnosticism,' where the faith of the mystic and dreamer hovers above a shoreless and soundless sea, trembling between hope and fear and doubt, where the clodhopper says to the metaphysician 'You're it,' and all bring up in a cul de sac: incontestable proof confronts all reasoning beings old enough to be out of the nursery.

"In order to conceive of an over-ruling providence, creator of the universe and arbiter of man's destiny, it becomes absolutely necessary to predicate a supreme intelligence. In other words, the creator must, among other qualities, possess those of *omniscience* and *omnipotence.* As a matter of fact every chief deity of christen-

don and heathendom is so postulated. Anything less would lead to a reductio ad absurbum—if the deity were conceivable as anything less than omniscient and omnipotent, perhaps he might not be more than half so wise and powerful, etc., etc. But in avoiding the reductio-ad-absurdum Scylla the hapless theological navigator forthwith comes to grief upon an equally treacherous Charybdis. There is no possible escape; for the moment that omniscience is predicated of a creator the inevitable corollary is that *he knew not only all of the good and beneficent consequences of his creative act, but also all the crimes, from the most trivial to the most hideous, from the beginning of creation to the uttermost limits of time, that would occur as the result of his creation.* It cannot be otherwise. The creator knows everything. These crimes were and are a part of 'everything'—no inconsiderable part, at that.

"But, furthermore, if the deity knew in advance all the crimes that would follow his creation (as under the hypothesis he did and does) those crimes necessarily had to be enacted since nobody acquainted with the rudiments of logic would jeopardize his reputation by claiming that any criminal could avoid doing what omniscience and omnipotence from the beginning knew he

(or she) would do. Conversely, no crime of whatever nature could ever by any possibility have taken place had the deity known from the beginning that the world was to be sinless and crimeless; yet, being all powerful, that was the creator's prerogative, had he so willed it.

"To contend, on the other hand, as legions of mental cripples have time out of mind contended, that God certainly knew all the crimes that would blacken his creation, yet offered his creatures their unrestricted choice between good and evil, is simply to invite the offices of some competent alienist. If the creator knew from the beginning that John Jones, for instance, would be a murderer, and if, in spite of his creator's knowledge to that effect, the said Jones should refrain from murder, deity would find itself in no end of a hole; it would enjoy the paradoxical distinction of knowing something that it didn't know. Besides which, Jones, having done something that his creator knew he would not do and having thus proved himself more powerful than deity, could immediately oust the deity and run the universe himself. Such would be the logical penalty for a creator who should, Frankenstein-like, raise up a creature more powerful than he (the creator). And yet millions of doddering imbeciles, both in and out of the pulpit, have

conceived no inconsistency in asserting that an omniscient God who necessarily always knew what his creatures' choice would be (whether the good or the evil way) nevertheless gave them all a chance to do as they pleased! For the expounders and proponents of any such pitiable specimen of brain work as that there is but one fitting injunction: 'Back to the woods!'

"The atheist is far kinder. Rather than reduce an omnipotent and omniscient being to a state of helplessness, to an absurdity or to a monster, he prefers to say: 'There is no God.'

"Thus passes one more iridescent and cherished dream of the earth-race and along with it goes a-glimmering the fanciful and beautiful, but probably baseless, hope of immortality. Certain it is that if the grave does not bring everlasting sleep man can never know aught to the the contrary. It is no less certain that if man has an immortal soul every blade of grass, every flower, every insect, every crawling, creeping and flying thing, from the minutest to the most unwieldy creature, also has an immortal soul; for all are admittedly made of the same primorial stuff. If anybody can seriously entertain the idea that sharks and devil-fish, mosquitoes, fleas, centipedes, bats and tigers have immortal souls; if he can without blinking accept the theory that a

cubic inch of rotten-stone contains the mortal remains of forty-one thousand million immortal souls—for we are assured that the skeleton of so many tiny diatoms are required to make up a cubic inch of that substance—it is reasonably certain that neither science nor logic will attempt to curb his truly remarkable imagination.

"But perchance the contention may be raised that the cosmos is governed by law; that law is neither spontaneous nor self-enforcing. To which science makes answer that there is no patent upon investigation in this field and that anybody is privileged to discover the law and the source of the law—if he can. Science is not dogmatic and logic simply refuses to swear by what is palpably and notoriously illogical. That is all. Because a nescient deity has been reduced to an absurdity and an omniscient one to a monster it does not necessarily follow that the last word has been said. The idea that a false philosophy should not be destroyed until a true one has been set up in its place is childish. It will not, as the phrase goes, hold water. Reason would seem to suggest that the sooner the false is discarded the sooner will the true have a chance to be set up.

"However, apropos of cosmic laws, one no sooner discovers a law and the immediate cause

of the law than he is led to suspect that the cause behind the law is itself only the effect of a prior cause, and so on ad infinitum. Which is probably equivalent to saying that the race will merrily pursue a First Cause as long as there shall be in the universe one unsolved riddle. It is a harmless pastime whether or not it be regarded as a profitless one.

"Finally, in the material universe all is change. Immutability does not inhere; and in the history of the lesser planets and satellites whose energy was long ago exhausted, whose once luminous and molten masses are now cold and lifeless, we may forecast the fate of the larger planets, the earth, even the giant sun himself. Permit me to quote a short paragraph from Edward Clodd's charmingly written 'Story of Creation':

" 'The ultimate transference of all energy to the ethereal medium involves the end of the existing state of things. But the ceaseless redistribution of matter, force-clasped and energy-riven, involves the beginning of another state of things. So the changes are rung on evolution and dissolution, on the birth and death of stellar systems—gas to solid, solid to gas, yet never quite the same—mighty rhythmic beats of which the earth's cycles, and the cradles and graves of her children, are minor rhythms.'

"We need to read such passages occasionally in order to acquire a broader and better-balanced view of our puny, unimportant role and swiftly passing hour upon the stage of Time. It is calculated to take some of the overweening conceit out of us to be reminded now and again, not merely that we ourselves do not cut a particularly wide swath in the scheme (or lack of scheme) of things, but that our planet itself and the stellar system of which it is a part are only passing incidents in the shifting scenes of the cosmic drama, 'minor rhythms' in the lusty song of the giant, Force, as one after another he binds and drags his resisting captives home. . . . . There is a ring of sadness in these minor chords and rhythms; but the music is too faint and far away to long repress the natural optimism and gaiety of the race. As the painted butterfly flits and dances in the sun, although the frosts and snows of winter are at hand, let us enjoy to the full the present and be unafraid of the future. Nothing can rob us of the pleasure we have had. Thanking you for your attention, permit me to commend the philosophy of the butterfly."

CHAPTER XII.

Five years have passed into history since the inauguration of the Co-operative Commonwealth of America. It is no longer so designated, however, as there are on the two American continents several co-operative commonwealths. Altruria is now the way it looks upon the map, and of course its people are called Altrurians. Perhaps it is as well. The name seems to fit with peculiar appropriateness those who were the first to introduce practical co-operation to a planet of flouting and doubting Thomases, very few of whom long for a return to the old economic system.

Wondrously fair to look upon and wondrously kind to her favored dwellers is Altruria. Her vast and beautiful domain, diversified by every topographical charm and every desirable climatic condition, is divided into eight principal departments of varying size: Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, California, Texas, Tennessee, Narragansett and Allegheny.

Kansas is the largest of the departments, being made up of the former states of Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Mis-

souri, Kansas, Nebraska, and the two Dakotas. This department is also the seat of government. The national capital is Scarlet Buttes, on the Missouri River, and its capitol edifice with the surrounding groups of administration buildings cannot in the world be surpassed, whether for boldness of conception, massiveness, originality and beauty of architecture, convenience and elegance of appointments or general sumptuousness of detail. Situated on a commanding bluff six hundred feet above the river, Scarlet Buttes is one of the show places of the continent. The government buildings, as well as all other public and private buildings of the capital, are constructed of a beautiful white limestone, sawed into blocks and polished, with trimmings of red sandstone, pressed and glazed brick in a variety of colors, sheet copper overlaid on steel and other fancy trimming materials in natural stone and different metals. A detailed description would read so much like that previously devoted to Kankakee that it may be omitted. In general, while nothing is lacking which renders the latter so attractive as a twentieth century habitation for mankind, everything in Scarlet Buttes is on a far more pretentious scale in respect to size and elaboration, in keeping with the traditions and requirements of ancient usage. The capital takes

its name from a pair of weather-scarred buttes, four or five miles upstream, whose rugged sides show outcroppings here and there of a peculiar blood-red rock. This was evidently too suggestive for the legend-makers to resist; so the story runs that in the pioneer days a party of pale-faces, en route for the gold fields, was there by vindictive red-skins rounded up and massacred, their blood permanently coloring the rocks.

In this extensive and productive department, reinforced by a system of reservoirs which store for future use the oceans of water that formerly went to waste in spring and summer freshets, can be raised the staple cereal crops for the whole world; but as many other countries are producing the same staples it is unnecessary for Kansas to raise and store more than enough, beyond the national requirements, to provide against a possible shortage elsewhere.

It would require a volume to describe the town of Graino, on the "Catapult" railroad—its miles of tracks, its elevators, warehouses, milling machinery, huge power fans and packing and shipping rooms, its mammoth hoists, chutes and tanks, and the perfect system from the time the different grains are freed from every particle of chaff and dust until they are packed ready for shipment in copper-sheathed, vermin-proof

storage vaults, where the temperature is artificially regulated to the proper degree. It is an exhibition in itself and one could linger there a month and then go away without having seen it all.

Truck farming, hay ranching, small fruits and berry culture, orcharding and hog-raising are all extensively followed in the sections found best adapted to the different industries.

Owing to the large number of new and modern towns demanded for the convenience and comfort of the workers, the immense mileage of highways and electric traction lines, the water systems, canals and reservoirs completed or projected, the citizens of Kansas have so far been, and for some years to come will be, busy as bees. Even so, none has labored longer than a six-hour shift in a day (inclusive of the time consumed getting to and from work) unless he chose. True, many have worked longer hours; but it was purely voluntary, the general rule throughout Altruria being that a half-day shift shall be considered a day's work. Furthermore, when the bulk of permanent public improvements shall have been completed, it is thought unlikely that any will need to work more than two or three hours a day.

Wyoming is the national cattle range. It comprises the old states, Montana, Idaho and

Wyoming. Its grazing lands, hay bottoms and mountain streams are nowhere excelled. From mountain range to kitchen range the strictest and most scientific supervision is maintained under conditions hygienically and sanitarily as perfect as human skill can provide. If we must include in our daily fare the flesh of animals (and there are and perhaps always will be honest differences of opinion as to its propriety) we assuredly can never eat better, tenderer, juicier or more wholesome beef than is slaughtered in Wyoming.

Connected with the abattoirs is a tannery which annually prepares millions of hides for the thousand-and-one manufactured articles which civilized man has come to look upon as indispensable. And while the by-products are not worked up quite so closely, perhaps, as in the good old "Jungle" days where nothing got away but the porker's dying squeal and the bovine's expiring breath, what with the fertilizer works, glue factory and similar industries, very little of value goes to waste.

In Wyoming, also, are the national breweries and distilleries, the water from a certain mountain cascade having its source up among the eternal snow and ice, having been pronounced superior for the purpose to any on the continent.

It of course goes without saying that the various liquors distilled are the real smooth, simon-pure article, the seek-no-farther and Eureka of all who occasionally or more frequently delight to worship at the shrine of Bacchus. It is true that the greater part of the product to date is in the storage cellars acquiring the age held to be so desirable in this class of goods, but a limited quantity of four-year-old rye which connoisseurs reverentially hold to the light before delightedly quaffing is now being distributed as an earnest of what the fully matured product will be. And while all the malt beverages are simply unapproachable for purity, flavor and general excellence, there is a beer they call Brownie—dark, almost black, delicious, creamy, satisfying, almond flavored (they used large quantities of almonds in the mash and the bitter is a delightful tang between that of the almond and the hop) and pre-eminently superior. It is no less pre-eminently care-dispelling and would dissipate even the troubles of a family man afflicted with too much mother-in-law. Yet withal it is exhilarating rather than intoxicating, no reasonable amount of it apparently being potent to make the average Altrurian monopolize more than his share of the sidewalk or create in his bosom the hallucination that he is an integral part of

a Wild West show. Of equal excellence and fame are the several brands of ale. Indeed all the distillery goods are straight, clean, pure, wholesome. The hops come from the renowned Willamette valley, the grains from the sunny plains of Kansas, and experts are in charge. Moreover the goods are produced to be drunk, not to be sold, which might be the same thing if it did not happen to be so entirely different.

California includes, besides the one-time state of the same name, Oregon, Washington and the western half of Nevada. This department, which nature has so prodigally showered with her richest charms of mountain, mesa, forest, valley, plain and shore, is easily the gem of Altruria. Nowhere else is the climate so winning, the flowers so gorgeous, the procession of the seasons so alluring, the sunshine so persistent or the response to man's co-operation so generous and marvelous.

And as no other department is so attractive from an all-round viewpoint none has undergone so magical a transformation in the five years that have flitted by on rushing wings. Some of the old towns and cities have been abandoned and destroyed, in keeping with the new and comprehensive scheme of development, others have been razed and rebuilt on the same magnificent

scale that characterizes all of Altruria's new cities, both large and small.

Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma have all fallen victims to the torch and axe of progress; their sites have been regraded and they have been rebuilt as twentieth century cities should be. Those who once called them beautiful now blush at their former stupidity. It is true they used to have one or two "show" streets where the captains of industry freely spent their money in an effort to unite attractiveness and exclusiveness in the neighborhoods favored with their approval; but they couldn't keep up the "lick." The crop of captains of industry wouldn't go around. Exclusiveness soon petered out in mediocrity and sham gentility which in turn was flanked by the poverty-stricken and disease-breeding pestholes where herded the miserable hordes developed by, and inseparable from, the system.

Portland has been regenerated. On the old site has sprung up, as if by the magician's wand, a dream city which many declare the loveliest in all Altruria, if not on earth. To stand in the semi-tropic park on Portland Heights of an afternoon in June with the sunshine, which in those latitudes assumes an almost supernatural brilliancy, streaming down out of a glorious sapphire sky whose soft, deep blue is unique—

streaming over a dream city of white and gold that stretches fair and far along the picturesque valley—lighting up the silver thread of the Willamette and the Columbia's yellow flood as it rolls impetuously toward the sea—bathing in an unearthly glory the snow-capped summits of the Cascades—St. Helens, Hood and all the rest: is perchance to come as near shaking off the "old Adam" in one's tout ensemble and parting company for the nonce with all the dross of earth as one may reasonably hope to come in this life.

The whole Willamette valley and the country to the south have shared in the general metamorphosis. Their towns are picturesque and modern throughout; their hop plantations, orchards, vineyards, nurseries and dairy ranches are the finest on earth; their parks, schools and amusement centres are unsurpassed; and whereas they formerly had the worst roads in the world, bar none, they now have many thousand miles of superior highways and boulevards—in a word, they live instead of merely existing to pay taxes.

A new San Francisco has arisen out of the ruins of the old; and while it is far more beautiful than ever, it is not as large, perhaps, as several other towns in the magnificent Sacra-

mento and San Joaquin valleys. It is still the shipping centre of the Pacific coast, but shipping is not so important an industry as it used to be, since Altruria does not produce for export except in exchange for such commodities as, by reason of climatic or other conditions, she cannot herself produce. It is a manufacturing centre and tourist resort. Her artificers in gold and silver, brass, copper, iron and other metals are world-renowned. Furniture-making and artistic wood-working are also extensively followed, the immense forests of California being on account of their inaccessibility, less exploited than those of any other department of the commonwealth. But that is not saying much, as the old-time greed of capitalism for the almighty dollar would have rigged up a sawmill in the parks of the New Jerusalem, invaded the Garden of Eden and slashed up into two-by-fours for the sake of profit, the Tree of Knowledge itself.

In Southern California the gods have been exceedingly kind to mortal manikins, but these same manikins have been even kinder to themselves. They have simply networked the whole region with splendid boulevards, zip-car tracks (they call the new fangled trolley a zip-car) and railroads of enormous power and speed. It is a country of magnificent distances, charming vistas

and idealistic, harmonious group life—a country where arboriculture, floriculture, viticulture and horticulture have reached the apex of excellence, where flourish to a perfection scarcely attainable elsewhere the orange, lemon, olive, fig, grape and numerous other fruits of tree and field and vine. It is, moreover, the autoists' heaven on earth.

Out of the dozen or more large cities in this corner of Altruria San Diego may be mentioned as the most notable in many respects. To say that she has been entirely rebuilt of stone, brick, marble, steel, concrete, glass, and other fireproof materials, with magnificently broad streets bordered with thousands of miles of lovely flowers, flowering shrubs and palm trees, is to give but the faintest idea of her wonderful beauty and phenomenal growth. She is now the largest city of the commonwealth and of the world. Her more than a million homes extend entirely around the eastern side of the bay and from the waterfront back onto the mesa more than six miles. "Los Terrados" is the name the Mexicans have given the city, because from the sea level back towards the foothills the metropolis is built on three evenly graded, gently sloping terraces, the cost of grading which under the competitive system would have amounted to more than the

value of all the yellow gold ever mined in the state. Another name for the city is "The Arc-Angel," a tribute to the quarter of a million huge arc lights which shed their dazzling brilliance abroad from glass globes all the colors of the rainbow. As seen at night from the deck of an incoming steamer—the multi-colored sea of coruscation rising tier on tier from the different teraces—the effect is spectacular and enchanting beyond description. But while all San Diegans are properly "stuck up" over their aerial symphony in colors, their particular pride and boast is a new sea-wall that completely encircles the bay, save for the narrow reef that Nature threw up and upon which man could scarcely improve. They have also dredged every foot of the harbor to a mean depth of twenty feet at low water and now any pleasure craft in the world may land her passengers anywhere along the wall. The crowning glory of all is an esplanade, or quay, fifteen hundred feet wide, level as a billiard table, almost, and smooth as glass. This extends the entire length of the city and of the wall. Facing this quay are the mammoth caravansaries for the accommodation of the enormous numbers of tourists who flock here when the greater portion of Altruria is wrapped in snow and ice; the theaters, cafes, dancing pavilions, and amuse-

ment resorts, the band stands, clubs, carousels and concert halls. Here, along this grand quay, summer or winter, from eight o'clock in the morning till midnight, may be seen hundreds of thousands of San Diegans; but from seven to ten in the evening they are to be counted by millions. It is the rendezvous of official and social life and Madame Grundy disports herself and her multitudinous charms in perennial glory. From every part of the city they gather, on foot, on bicycles and in auto-carriages varying in size from the single seated run-about to the huge barge carrying two hundred or more people. But no horses—nit und nein, not! Nor any cats and dogs, thank you. San Diegans won't stand for 'em, the nawsty things! If anybody wants to live with 'em let him go back to the woods and mountains where he can have a million if he wishes. And talk about your skating rinks for young Altruria! When in the world before did youngsters ever have a skating rink twenty-five miles long and fifteen hundred feet wide? That they appreciate it is amply evidenced by the way they patronize it.

But, goodness! enough space has been given to San Diego. Los Angeles will be jealous and the angels up there will tear their flowing locks. In brief, the City of Angels is not a whit behind

her southern neighbor in material improvement or anything else that's up to date; and while she hasn't the "finest harbor in the world" she has no dearth of compensating charms and advantages. It is all a matter of individual choice and millions of Altrurians prefer her quaint and picturesque scheme of architecture—a combination of Renaissance and Old Mission—to anything the sun shines upon. Her handsome boulevards are riotous with gorgeous flowers, her stately palms life their graceful fronds aloft with a luxuriance and vigor scarcely rivaled in the world, she is still the Pacific's Queen of the Carnival and existence within her borders is simply idyllic. . . . . But a ponderous volume could not do justice to the Department of California. Her vineyard, orchard and wine industries, her mountain resorts and big caravansaries, park systems and railroads would alone furnish a year's occupation to a special correspondent. Vast and mighty is Altruria and other departments press for recognition.

Colorado embraces the territory once known as New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Colorado; also the eastern half of Nevada. In this picturesque region where the majestic peaks of the Rockies tower among the clouds mining and metallurgy are extensively pursued, as of yore.

From time immemorial, necessary to the welfare and comfort of the race, the metals which Nature has hidden in her rocky storehouse are doubly necessary under the co-operative system which abhors cheapness and builds its monuments of imperishable materials. Iron, copper, zinc, lead and combinations and alloys of these are used much more extensively than ever before in manufacturing, building and in the arts and crafts. The finer and more precious metals, so called, are also mined and reduced in large quantities. They no longer enslave mankind nor retard and block the acquisition of those material improvements that alone constitute true national wealth; but in the useful and decorative arts their vogue is greater than ever.

Mining is no longer the hazardous, distasteful and strenuous occupation it was when only the strongest, under the sole inducement that could tempt a human being to follow it, a comparatively high rate of wages, took their lives in their hands and were lowered in rattle-trap cages to noisome and frightful depths, there to battle with noxious gases, fire-damp, reckless bosses, makeshift protective devices and the thousand-and-one dangers to life and limb inseparable from exploitation. On the contrary, at whatever level the workers are engaged the shafts, tunnels,

branches and leads are high and roomy, thoroughly ventilated, perfectly lighted by electricity, properly shored with steel supports and, moreover, machinery does everything that human ingenuity can provide in the way of labor-saving contrivances. As a result of which, coupled with short hours and the best living the earth affords, thousands of mechanically-inclined young men prefer the life to any other.

This department is also the national dairy ranch; and although dairying is followed to a greater or less extent in other departments, nowhere is it so specialized and nowhere else do dairy products attain such uniform excellence. Its butter, cheese, cream and milk are daily shipped in immense quantities all over the commonwealth, fast freight (refrigerated cars) enabling these table delicacies to reach any part of the country within a few hours after packing.

Poultry raising is another important industry of this department, many millions of hens, ducks and geese being cared for by communities that devote their whole time and attention to its various branches. On the Little Colorado and other streams poultry products are packed and daily shipped by the trainload, thus shattering forever one more highly-prized asset of the funny writers; for the perennial joke about ancient eggs

has lost its savor and nothing is in sight to take its place. Consumers in general, however, are not losing sleep on that account.

Texas is that portion of the commonwealth lying south of Kansas and west of the Mississippi that formerly included the states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. This is Altruria's cotton belt. It produces seven-eighths of all the cotton raised in the country and, besides, represents the up-to-date attempt at a practical solution of the "negro" question. Negroes not only perform all the labor of planting, tending and harvesting this staple, but they also do all the manufacturing, every cotton mill in the commonwealth being located in Texas. Under the supervision of a few hundred experts of the Caucasian race the blacks run the whole department. They have built their own new cities which are as modern and beautiful as any in Altruria. Their schools, elementary, academic, technical; their universities, trades and manual training institutes, are all under the management of colored teachers and trainers. They have built their own splendid system of highways, run the government stores, have their own theatres, bands, sports, and recreations, their schedules of alternating labor and relaxation, just as do the whites; they live just as well in every

respect and are at last happy, industrious, ambitious, free from exploitation, self-respecting and respected of all. There is only one restriction—an unwritten law that they perfectly understand and do not seek to override—that they virtually stay in their own department, unless for good and sufficient reason to the contrary, and there work out their racial destiny, whatever that may be and wherever it may finally lead. In some far-distant day, perhaps, when Evolution, the law of natural selection, the imitative faculty, the aspiration which impels the genus—but speculation is idle, the future is wrapped in impenetrable mist and prophets and prophecy are justly passing out of vogue. For the present they are industrious and contented. No material want is left unsatisfied. That they are ingenious, ambitious and capable is attested by the quality of their manufactured products which range from coarsest weaves to the finest and most delicate fabrics possible to turn out with machinery.

In the winter season, too, they drop all work and hold a month's carnival in New Orleans. It is not called Mardi-Gras and has no religious significance; but the whole department is en fete and thousands of whites invade the town to witnes their parades, floats and flower battles, their

grotesque ceremonials and exaggerated antics, their cake-walks and Voodoo dances and their gorgeous costumes, in comparison with which Solomon's raiment would look like a second-hand outfit. The dusky belles are loaded with blazing diamonds, gems and precious stones of every description, gold and silver ornaments and apparel glaring enough to put the moon and stars out of business, while the bucks are simply impossibly imposing as they swagger around town in toggery that would make a Somali king go off and die with envy.

In music, of which they are passionately fond, these people, under the excellent instruction now possible for all, are making rapid progress. Rare, highly trained and even extraordinary voices are not uncommon among their favorite vaudeville artists. Some of their choruses and glee clubs are superb and out of the several brass bands supported by the department one or two could be picked whose performances would not greatly suffer in comparison with those of any similar organization in the world.

There is, too, an ebony-skinned son of Thespis, tall, handsome, barbaric, whose histrionic talent is of blue-ribbon calibre, possessing the fire, the brilliancy and pathos typical of an outcast race and a versatility and genius of interpretation

that would do credit to any race. They call him L'Africain. His impersonation of Othello is famous on two continents and in carnival time even the renowned Vlanchi, Altruria's leading tragedienne, does not disdain, as Desdemona, to nightly bare her lily-white throat to his murderous grip, in the marvelous mimic-death scene which will melt up hearts of snow as long as mimetic art shall endure.

Oh, yes, they are coming on, these children of the tropic suns. The wheel of Evolution is turning. As the barkers in the old-time gambling joints used to shout: "Round and round the little wheel goes; and where she'll stop nobody knows."

Tennessee is formed from the states that were Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, the two Carolinas and Tennessee. This department is famous for its tobacco which is cultivated and manufactured on a most extensive scale, for it not only supplies Altruria's millions with their favorite form of nicotine, but is the commonwealth's principal export commodity, going all over the world in exchange for the things we cannot or do not produce

Horses and mules are also here extensively bred for, except in the cities, they are still in demand. As the years go by and every part of

the country has been supplied with the best macadam roads; when needed inventions shall have remedied existing defects in farm machinery, these faithful beasts will almost completely disappear. Yet not entirely. As a show animal the horse will still exist. The exhilarating pastime of coaching, though subject to its ups and downs in favor of the speedier auto-car, will be revived from time to time since nothing on earth, æsthetically and from the viewpoint of picturesqueness, can ever take the place of the old coach and a spanking team of six. Practically, however, the horse has had his day and must go. And it is far better thus. There is another side than the æsthetic, another view than the picturesque. It is one that will appeal most powerfully to the thoughtful, the kind-hearted, the true nature-lovers and animal-lovers the world over. It is the remembrance that man's inhumanity to man, inexpressibly shocking thought it has often been, has never equaled, even approximately, his inhumanity to brutes, especially the noble quadruped whose day and vogue are passing. It is needless to be more specific. Those whose hearts have ached, whose righteous wrath has flamed a million times at revolting spectacles of brutality on the part of horse-owners and drivers, will understand, while

the naturally indifferent, the willfully or unconsciously cruel, would regard the picture as highly exaggerated, if not maliciously overdrawn.

The southern districts of Tennessee are noted for their winter gardening, pursued in the open and cultivated under glass. Daily after the middle of January hundreds of trains leave for the North and West loaded with early strawberries, lettuce, cucumbers, radishes, cress, spinach, asparagus and other vegetables. In short, no busier hive of industry exists in the commonwealth and no department has advanced more rapidly in those material modern innovations and improvements that everywhere mark the boundless difference between living for the pleasure of living and living to pay the exactions of monopoly levied upon the earth and all thereto pertaining.

Allegheny includes Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New York. It is the centre of the iron and steel manufacturing industry.

From a pocket knife to an ocean liner, from a locomotive to a carpet tack, everything in the machinery, tools, hardware, cutlery, construction and navigation lines is here carried on with a system, a vastness and perfection never before possible. Owing to the pressing demand for

rails, rolling stock (the new cars are built of steel) engines, locomotives, electrical supplies, bridge material, construction steel, tunneling and road-building apparatus, machinery for agricultural and domestic use, ship-building sundries and countless other forms of manufactured iron and steel products, this has so far been Altruria's "rush" department. Hundreds of new blast furnaces, puddling and rolling mills, foundries, etc., have been erected. Night and day in four five-hour shifts, the work of supplying the country's needs has during the past five years gone steadily on. For the next five years there will be no appreciable slackening; after which it is expected the commonwealth will be pretty well equipped with railroads and rolling stock, highways, bridges and new towns, thus giving the workers in this department a somewhat less strenuous life, as well as considerably shortening the working time.

In Allegheny, too, are located all of the national glass works and not a few of the potteries. Here are the immense coal deposits, the natural gas and oil wells, and at the same time no inconsiderable portion of the crude ores that are the sine qua non of the iron and steel industry.

Ponderous and marvelous machinery lightens the workers' toil and does pretty much every-

thing but talk; nothing is lacking that human wisdom, foresight and experience can suggest and the millions of mechanics and apprentices work their five-hour shifts with an energy and interest that are in themselves a wordless sermon on the benefits of co-operation, and then pursue whatever form of recreation appeals to them, just as in other departments.

Narragansett takes in the six states that used to be known as New England. It is by Altrurians jocularly and familiarly referred to as the "Sheep Ranch" because all of the sheep in the commonwealth are bred and tended in this department, sacred to the memory of the Pilgrims, King Phillip, Massasoit, Roger Williams, tea parties, the cod-fish (not to mention an aristocracy that used to be distinguished from other aristocrats by changing the appetizing substantive into an adjective) Bunker Hill, baked beans, wooden nutmegs, blue laws and Blue-bellies, witch-hunters and a great many other persons and things. In the same jocular vein its denizens are frequently called "Mutton-heads," but this apparently disparaging allusion is more in reference to their occupation than on account of any extraordinary cranial thickness, actual or supposititious; for the sins of the fathers, having been duly expiated, have now by the statute

of limitations become innocuous and etiolated beyond all suspicion of a scarlet tinge.

But while sheep raising may be accorded first rank in the industrial life of Narragansett, many millions being annually bred and slaughtered, the leather industry is of scarcely less importance. All the leather factories, harness, saddlery and trimmings establishments, boot and shoe making shops, and manufactories for trunks, bags, gloves and numerous other leather articles, together with many of the tanneries, are here located. Altruria's immense woolen mills are also all found in this department and, as if the foregoing were not enough to keep her 20,000,000 population busy, many thousand fishermen pursue the finny tribe, all the way from Provincetown to the Grand Banks. Fishing, however, is no longer the dangerous pursuit it used to be. Deep-water fishing craft are built of steel, are five to seven hundred feet in length, provided with every possible convenience and carry crews of several hundred men each. These monster vessels are practically unaffected by wind or weather and ride out the heaviest storms as safely as if docked in home ports. They have unlimited refrigerating capacity and when they put to sea for fish they stay at sea until their fare of several thousand tons is stowed aboard.

Winter or summer, rain or shine, snow or blow, the hardy fishermen ply their calling. Their quarters are roomy, comfortable, even luxurious, steam heated in cold weather and amply provided with amusement features. Their small boats for trawling and seining are propelled by power, so that if a sudden storm comes up or a heavy fog drifts in they can quickly reach the ship. In short, the life of the fisherman has been as thoroughly revolutionized as has the landsman's existence.

Such, in a random, imperfect, hop-skip-and-jump way of describing it, is life in Altruria after five years of co-operation.

That the competitive system was begun and continued because of the fear of coming want; that this fear engendered greed and that greed, in turn, became the "ruling passion" is held to be too axiomatic to admit of controversy. Wherefore the claim that co-operation has reversed previously existing standards whether or not it has reversed or changed that rather vague and indefinite concatenation called human nature; and whereas in the past physicians and metaphysicians have come forward with an infinite

variety of prescriptions for the guidance of mortals, the object of existence is now plain and patent to all: *to enjoy to the full the life that we, as mere accidents of the cosmos, have had thrust upon us.* Competition is warfare first, last and all the time. But nobody would contend that there is anything particularly joyous or enjoyable about warfare. Moreover the ultimate object of all this warfare was to place the successful above and out of reach of competition. It could never entirely succeed because even the most successful had to fight continually to hold their possessions. Co-operation by insuring peace, happiness and abundance to all, free from struggle and warfare, thus proves itself the scientifically sound and only rational mode of existence.

In the matter of individual recompense, that imaginary rock upon which the co-operative ship of state was expected to be pounded to pieces, there has to date been no temptation to depart from the established precedent of giving everybody everything he or she desires, up to the limit of the commonwealth's productive capacity, in return for labor-service rendered the state. This phenomenon, impossible of realization as it would have been in the handicraft period of production, is now practically accomplished through

the tremendous power of modern machinery to supplement the work of human hands, increasing ten thousand fold their capacity. So marvelous is this power indeed that, having regard for the limits of human consumption, on the one hand, and the boundless possibilities of machinery, on the other, it is readily apparent to many that when the extensive public improvements—the railroads, highways, cities, parks, rivers and harbors, water-storage reservoirs and landscape gardening schemes shall have somewhat nearer approached completion, thus releasing millions of workers for the production of everyday, domestic articles of consumption, the problem for the government to solve will be: How shall we increase our consumptive capacity so that our restless millions, for their own physical wellbeing, may find an average four-hours-a-day employment? rather than, How shall we be able to provide for the increasing requirements of our population? That day is in sight and when it arrives the anomalous and amazing spectacle will be presented of people actually begging for work, as a time-killing, anti-monotony boon, instead of anybody being unduly concerned lest he should be doing more than his share of production. That will be the problem, and upon its solution may hang the permanency of the co-operative principle itself.

However, sufficient unto the day, et cetera. The erection and crossing of imaginary bridges is a fruitless employment.

For the present, anyway, the domestic sky is without a cloud, contentment is general, peace and plenty abound, four hours is the average labor-day, important schemes for the welfare of all and the aggrandizement of Altruria are either nearing completion or well under way and few, indeed, are the discords to disturb the serenity of old General Prosperity whose soldiers of the common good keep watch and ward all up and down the land.

The old calendar Sunday is kept as has been the immemorial custom. That is to say, the populace does not work. It is a day of recreation, rest, excursioning or what not, according to individual preference. Churches are few and far between, although there is no hostility, proscription, ostracism or persecution of any sort against the proponents of whatever religious cult or philosophy. Here and there may be found a zealot—ardent, forceful, eloquent—who would fain constitute himself the nucleus of a band of faithful worshipers at some orthodox or heterodox shrine whereat the symbolism, the mystery, the pomp and splendor of a bygone age may be revived. But the crowds drift carelessly by; his

burning eloquence falls upon unheeding ears. In a dim, intangible way, not always to be expressed in words, the masses have come to understand that the supernatural powers aid those who aid themselves and, conversely, that those who sufficiently aid themselves have little or no need of supernatural assistance. They have not forgotten that the churches and their inspired prophets who spoke in the name of the Christ vigorously flayed the adherents of co-operation and upheld to the last ditch the competitive system under which they had led the life of outcast dogs. Such are some of the reasons why priestcraft in Altruria is so unpopular. But the time was ripe for many forms of superstition to go into intellectual bankruptcy and, besides, the rewards of sacerdotal leadership are far from being what they once were. Men may still speculate upon what the impenetrable future has in store—they doubtless will—but one abundant and satisfying life in the here-and-now is by most accounted worth a baker's dozen supposititious careers in the hereafter-and-then; and this practical view certainly does not lack its advantages.

And as Altruria has gone so has gone the world. Canada, Mexico and South America are following in her footsteps. They, too, have learned the better way and are convinced that

when nations struggle for the juicy plums of conquest and mastery the fruit is only too certain to be bitter and battered and worthless to the victors. The prediction of President Tempest in his speech of acceptance that if the comrades of the United States should succeed in establishing the co-operative principle over here no government on earth could long continue on the competitive basis has been amply verified by the results; and that rulership, whether "divine" or less pretentious, which perpetuated itself by militarism, relying upon the stupidity and credulity of the masses, finds nowadays none so gullible as to do it honor. Leaders there are and no doubt always will be; but the quality of leadership is proven by the quality of service rendered. The diplomatic leadership that used to rant fulsome and glowing promises to the ear only to break them to the hope has lost its power over the millions. With the knocking away of that former prop of despotism, armed force, diplomats and diplomacy are in danger of becoming extinct. Men no longer meet with honeyed words on their lips and murder in their hearts to reenact the role of Judas Iscariot. The spectacular and ludicrous farce of holding international congresses to devise and sanction beatific methods of human butchery has gone out of fashion.

For universal peace, which in the language of those same diplomatists was described as a "bright star floating far above this mundane sphere, to be always striven for, but never attained," has been realized. The obvious moral of all of which is: When striving to rope a star, do not expect to round it up by loping away from it.

* * * * *

The flags of Altruria are flying to the breeze, the bands are playing in the park at Twenty-third Street station, New York City, the eastern terminus of the 'Frisco Catapult railroad. Enormous crowds fill the capacious square and overflow into adjacent territory. Hotel windows and balconies are lined with eager, expectant faces and surrounding roofs are black with humanity. All are cheering, waving flags, shouting and laughing, waiting for the psychological moment.

And why is the forum crowded? Well, to be exact, the Catapult line has completed and inaugurated its "catapult" overhead system, operated by compressed air, by means of which the mails and such passengers as are in a particular hurry or who care for the novel sensation are expected to cover in three hours the

three thousand miles which stretch between New York and San Francisco. It lacks a quarter of four o'clock P. M. and at four the train will be off. Altrurians are interested, not only because this is the first regular train to attempt the run on schedule time, but because President Tempest and half a dozen of his executive council are to be passengers. The bands chop off their music, the crush around the station grows denser. The president is down for a short speech of congratulation. He is trying to make good; but the buzz and roar, the tumultuous cheering from the roofs, drown his words. Above the din a whistle splits the air, short, shrill, peremptory. It is the engineer's five-minute signal.

"All aboard!" cries the conductor, and the president and party wave their adios and mount the stairs leading to the elevated platform where stands the queer looking train of three cars and what passes for an engine.

The cheering turns to a pandemonium of sounds; the boats on the river set up an unearthly shrilling; the bands blare out a quickstep and from an adjacent roof another band, all by its lonesome, is droning, "Say Au Revoir, But Not Good-bye."

"Good-bye, President Bill!"

"Take care of yourself—good presidents are scarce!"

"There's nothing slow about you, Bill, old man!"

Thus shouts the crowd as the presidential party, bending almost double, crawl into their cage, for that is what it is, inasmuch as it is only four feet high by less than six feet wide and a trifle over sixteen feet in length.

The station clock chimes out the hour and before the last stroke of the gong has ceased to echo there is a sharp hissing, as of released air pressure, and the catapult is off. Those who occupy vantage points see a black shadow flit across North river; and that is all. The Jersey coast swallows the shadow and even while the watchers train their eyes upon the vanishing point the shadow is twenty miles away.

Once seated within the cage the party experienced no inconvenience on account of its abbreviated proportions. All was luxurious, tasteful, comfortable and although going at the tremendous clip of nearly twenty miles a minute there was an incredible smoothness and freedom from jar—scarcely a sense of motion, in fact.

Seated near the president were Ordway, Mercereau and George. Mercereau had been looking out of the window.

"What do you see?" inquired President Bill.

"See!" returned Mercereau, "one might as well be in a smoke-house on the Smoky river

trying to look at the landscape through a pair of smoked glasses!"

"Well," said the president philosophically, "you can't expect to whiz across country at a thousand miles an hour and count the chickens and rose bushes along the track."

"This card table must be intended for use," declared George, "suppose we have a game of whist."

Nobody objecting the deal commenced, the president and Ordway against George and Mercereau. From time to time daylight was shut off and turned on again with a glare and suddenness that were startling. The train was out in western Pennsylvania, as the region used to be called, going through a series of cuts and tunnels, each from a mile to six or eight miles long. It was rather hard on the eyes and the president swore softly. Almost before he could determine the cause of the annoyance, however, the catapult had left them far behind and was rushing through Ohio. Now and again a blood-curdling shriek cut the air and died away in a long-drawn minor wail. It was nothing but a surface train proceeding in the opposite direction at a speed half as prodigious as their own.

President Bill and his partner won the first game; their opponents had just scored the sec-

ond and the cards were being shuffled for the rubber when the train passed through what appeared to be a thick cloud of yellow smoke or fog and their speed began to perceptibly slacken.

"Jerusalem! What was that?" demanded Ordway.

"That's the 20-mile signal," explained the president. "We are approaching Chicago. If we play fast enough we can finish the rubber before we slide into Denver." And even while he spoke the Catapult was skillfully brought to a standstill over the heads of a wildly yelling and surging throng of Chicagoans.

Two or three mail pouches were thrown out upon the platform, as many were picked up, the president and his party waved a gracious acknowledgment from the car windows and the train shot out of the station on its overland run with the speed of a rocket.

"Can any of you people tell me why it is that the mails are so light?" propounded Mercereau, picking up his hand for the rubber.

Nobody seemed equal to the effort and he went on: "Then perhaps I'd better enlighten you. The reason is because a person who had to write a communication of any length could board the Catapult, cross the continent, tell it and get back, all in less time than he could write it out and mail it."

"That isn't so bad," acknowledged President Bill, "now I'll give you one. Why is it that although twenty miles a minute is considered pretty fair speed, even for Altrurians, we're apparently going a thousand times faster than that?"

"You'll have to show me," declared Mercereau, "why, if we were skating through space at any such gait as you are giving us credit for, our time between New York and 'Frisco would be less than a quarter of a second."

"Right you are; but I think we can do better than that—we have so far," the president replied.

"Great head!" cried Mercereau, taking out his watch. "Boys, we're all an hour fast. We left New York at four o'clock. It is only four now, Central time. It will be four by Mountain time when we reach Denver and it'll be the same hour when we pull up in 'Frisco—provided we've got no Jonah aboard. Therefore we do the paradoxical stunt of crossing the continent in no time at all."

"That explains it all," murmured George, lazily dealing the cards around.

"Explains what?" demanded Ordway.

"Well, to tell the truth, I was puzzled to account for the circumstance that we played only two games of whist between New York and Chicago; but of course if we covered the distance

in no time that makes us out pretty swift guys, after all."

"Better hurry up," suggested Mercereau, "or you'll be more amazed than ever to find yourself in Denver before you've thrown around the first hand. We're crossing the Mississippi now, or rather we were when I commenced to say it. I suppose we're approaching the Missouri and Scarlet Buttes by this time."

"Say!" proceeded George, with a glance out of the window at the jumbled and tangled blur that under the old methods of locomotion would have been called a landscape, "I've got a hunch that something's going to happen. I——"

"Where do you feel it the worst?" inquired President Bill, solicitously.

"This is no joke," asserted the committeeman, "when I was young my old dad told me to always go slow and—look at the way I am following his sage counsel!"

The roar that greeted this pleasantry was taken advantage of by Ordway to work off a gruesome yarn relating to one of his own early escapades in which unsophisticated youth and a circus balloon prominently figured, to the temporary damage of the former and the utter demolition of the latter.

Then President Bill piked in with a story of how he once attempted to go down the Mt.

Washington railroad on a slide-board; of how the combination got away from him, and of his six-mile ride in a minute and thirteen seconds, hitting the level track at the foot of the mountain with a momentum that carried him all the way to Crawford's.

All of which jarred loose one of the flood-gates in Mercereau's memory and he commenced to relate a weird tale of Alp-climbing in which two rival guides got to quarreling during an ascent, and of how words led to blows, finally precipitating the whole outfit down the mountain where, by a miracle of luck, the party escaped death. He was in the midst of this thriller when an exploding track torpedo and another cloud of yellow smoke gave warning that the train was nearing Denver. . . . . But something was manifestly wrong. Instead of slowing down the Catapult shot through the town like a lost bullet seeking its affinity and plunged into the rayless viscera of the Rockies. . . . . Inky darkness supervened and a nameless terror. . . . . Had the driver gone mad? or dropped dead at his controlling lever? or . . . or what? Somebody should have switched on the electric lights.

Crouching in the darkness by the windows of that winged Pegasus which had raced the sun

neck and neck all the way from New York to Denver, and had not lost an inch of ground, the president and his friends, as the train whizzed through one gloomy tunnel after another and, emerging, leaped fearful chasms at a bound, could only dumbly wonder what the end would be. . . . . Not a word was spoken; not a sound broke the stillness except the low, vibrating sing-song of the rail. . . . . Once President Bill arose mechanically and started to crawl forward, evidently with the intention of investigating; but, remembering that the only exits were on the side of the car, he dropped helplessly back into his chair.

* * * * *

Now the train is rushing madly across a wide plain at the far side of which is a towering, snow-summited mountain. Straight up into the August sunshine, it lifts its solitary, majestic head—up into the soft blue dome unflecked by the semblance of a cloud—thousands and thousands of feet. And, running in a shining thread toward the tip-top—oh, wonder of wonders!—the spellbound watchers behold what is apparently a duplicate of the Catapult track. . . . . The mountain is miles away, yet in a breath the train has covered the distance. . . . . "Good God! we're lost!" groans someone in a voice hoarse with horror.

The cry is the signal of doom for, with blanched faces and frozen hearts, the passengers realize that the train has left the main track and is climbing that precipitous grade. Straight up it shoots, like a swallow on the wing and then . . . . . plunges off into sheer space thousands of feet to the rocky gorge below!

Over and over, crashing and bumping, falling, dropping, tumbling to destruction, rolls the Catapult. And President Bill, the perspiration breaking from every pore, cries out with the agony of a strong man who meets death in its most fearful form . . . . . and waits for the crash that will end all things for him. . . . . .

CHAPTER XIII.

"Oh!—oh!—oh!! Bill! Bill Tempest!! *What* is the matter with you? What *is* the matter with you? What is the *matter* with you? What is the matter with *you?* Oh! my gracious goodness! Bill! Bill! Bill! —o-oh!"

Thus adjured, the honorable ex-assemblyman and novelist opened his eyes and stared with interest at his surroundings. He found himself in his own cozy den at the top of the house. There were his uncorrected proofs on the table; there was the brown pitcher which had contained the delicious rum punch; there were the warm ashes of the fire that had died out in the grate; and there, large as life, was his faithful better half, still faithfully and hysterically shrieking at the top of her lungs.

A look of exceeding relief overspread the countenance of the novelist.

"This is better," he murmured, glancing at the clock. It was 2:30 in the morning.

"For heaven's sake, Josie," he expostulated, stretching his legs to work some of the kinks out of his joints, "if you'll let up inquiring what's the matter with me long enough to permit

it I'll pass along the same conundrum—only I shouldn't be able in a lifetime to throw into it all the. variations that you can. The chronometer informs me that it is now 2:30 ante meridiem—and here you are in your street wraps instead of being abed and asleep as the 'plain duty' of the situation would seem to suggest. Now—perhaps I'm a little slow to—er——"

"Why, of course I'm dressed for the street!" exclaimed madame, emphatically, "I've just come in from the street."

"Oh—you have," returned her husband, incredulously.

"Certainly—Darby Blake saw me home."

"Oh—he did. Well, if it's a fair question—what the devil were you and Darby Blake doing on the street at this bewitching hour?"

"Why, good gracious!—don't you know we've had a fearful storm? When we started for the theatre the storm caught us down in Morningside park and we turned back. We had a perfectly terrible time getting back to the Blakes's. It was snowing great guns and the auto could scarcely budge at all. Of course we all stopped there waiting for the storm to abate. Instead of letting up it kept right on snowing and blowing till after midnight. I was on needles, for I knew you would be anxious about me——"

"I was simply worried to death," glibly interpolated her lord and master. "If you hadn't come just when you did I should have been out looking for you."

Madame's ingenuous dark eyes mirrored the doubt that arose in her soul, but she went on: "Then we had to wait for the snow-plows to clear the sidewalk. Why! I guess the snow is ten feet deep. You never saw the like—but here I am. When I came into the room I thought you were choking to death! Such a frightful noise as you were making—ugh! Now, sir, give an account of yourself—I want to know what you've been doing all this time."

"Oh—nothing much," said the honorable Bill, "guess I must have fallen asleep, waiting for you, and had the nightmare. Come, my dear, let's get to bed."

THE END

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